

SURE-FOOTING

In

Christianity,

Or

Rational Discourses on

The Rule of FAITH.

With

Three Appendixes relating to Dr. Pierce
Mr. Whitby, and Mr. Stillingfleet.

SECOND EDITION

Adding a *Fourth*, Subverting Fundamen-
tally and Manifoldly my L^d. of Down's
DISSUASIVE.

With a Letter to Dr. Casaubon,

By J. S.

*Ecce nos ex Patribus ad Patres per manus tradi-
tam fuisse hanc sententiam demonstravimus.
Athanasius.*

LONDON Printed in the Year MDCLXV.

To the
QUEEN:

Madam,

THough the Faith *I* write for
be far more firmly esta-
blish't then Heaven and
Earth themselves, (as the Worlds
great Master has by his own word
assur'd us) and so needs no Sup-
port but its own Invincible
Strength: Yet, I am told by my
reason, that nothing so clears and
recommends Religion to the Ge-
nerality, as the vertuous *Life* and
eminent Devotion of Them that
profess it. But, where shall I seek
those happiest Effects and noblest
Arguments of Truth? If I consider

them in their abstracted *Idea's* they are Invisible as Angels; too subtle and delicate for vulgar eyes. **V**Where then may *I* hope to meet those excellent Forms vested with Bodies? If *I* consult the common Judgment; *I* expect to be sent to some Hermit's Cell, or the private Oratory of some holy *V*otarefs; where *I* may find them, indeed, embody'd; but withal, half-bury'd: Incomparable Lights, but, shut up in a kind of dark Lanthorn; where they burn safely *I* confess, but shine to few: while Those *I* seek, must be high and conspicuous, to send forth their Beams and Influences over all the World; and in that regard, *Courts* are the properest Firmament for such Illustrious Stars;

Stars; and Courts are easily seen,
but where's the Star?

In this perplexity, *Madam*, it pleas'd the Goodness of Heaven to relieve me; for, as the mention of *Courts* brought immediately into my memory the happiness our Nation is blest with by Your *Majesty's* Residence among us; so the Contemplation of Your Exemplar *Life* fill'd my soul with joy to have found, at last, those sublime and heroick *Virtues*; whose perfect Conformity to the Rules of Catholick Religion is, alone, capable to convince the *Certainty* of its *Truth*. Such an unwearied Constancy in Devotion, such a degree of Fervor in that Constancy, cannot possibly proceed from a luke-warm Probability

in Faith: such frequent Retirements to intimate Conversations with Heaven, such Mortifications, and contempt of Court-Entertainments, and (which is yet harder) such Innocence and Purity amidst the necessary Admittances of them, as they all conspire to speak Your Soul Angelical, so they clearly prove the vigorous Activity of the Faith that breeds them, far beyond the drowsy Indifferency of a probable Opinion. Thus, *Madam*, while Schollars but *discourse*, YOU live Demonstrations. Permit me then to use, not Your bare *Name*, but Your *Vertues* as a Patronage to my Endeavours; since the Motive of this my Dedicatory meant These for its Substance, and Your Temporal

poral Supremeness onely for a Circumstance. Others *Complement* while they dedicate, I *Argue* all the while: nor intend I this for a farther Display of Your Excellent Vertues (which already are sufficiently manifest to all the *VV*orld) but to breed a more serious reflexion on *Them* in the minds of those against whom *I* write; and other well-meaning, but misled persons.

This advantage Your Majesty and the *Practical* Provers of Catholick Faith have above us *Speculators*, that Your whole Life is a Continual Argument for It; while we are bound to expect Seasons and wait Opportunities: Nor should *I* at this time have offered

fer'd to appear, had not the Multitude of Books lately Printed against Catholick Religion made it my plain and *necessary* Duty with all my little power to defend It. **W**hat I have endeavour'd, I most humbly lay at Your Majesties feet, and remain,

M A D A M,

Your Majesties

most dutiful Subject

and most obedient Servant

J. S.

P R E F A C E

To the Intelligent READER.

i. **H**E is little acquainted with the paths which lead to Science who knows not that the settling the First Principle in any Affair, is of mainest Import towards Satisfaction in that particular; because, if such a Principle be not first settled, the whole Discourse, as relying on that Principle for its Certainty, must needs waver and stagger. Reflecting on this plainest Truth and withall on the manner how very many (I wish I might not say most) Controversies are manag'd; that is, by debating much about diverse Conclusions, but very little about the first Principle in Controversy, I cannot wonder if Disputes come slowly to an End when few of them were ever rightly begun. Another mischief and even despair of entire Satisfaction springs from hence; that, seeing all Dispute supposes an Agreement between the Disputers in some acknowledg'd Principle, I much fear, while things are carry'd on this fashion, this Requisit is wanting to the Catholick and Protestant Controvertists; For, neither doth the Protestant from his heart hold (witness the Books of their most extold Champions, and even the 39 Articles, to the contrary) the Testimonies of Fathers and Councils, Certain and Convictive; nor even Scripture always as to its
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Letter and the Sence they give it, (for they pretend Infallible Certainty of none of these;) much less does the Catholick agree that private Interpretations of Scripture, or Citations from Fathers (not seeking as Witnesses of the Churches Belief) are of sufficient Authority to settle the True, or overthrow a False or pretended Faith. Yet, notwithstanding all this, each Antagonist permits the other to frame his Discourses upon these Grounds as if he held the Method were good and allowable; which not being heartily granted by either, what satisfaction can we expect but endless and fruitless contests, for want of Agreement in some acknowledg'd Principle, while this Method is follow'd. Nay more, were it suppos'd that both sides had agreed not to reject in their Disputes such a Principle; yet still, however one side might happen to foil the other so far as to make him contradict himself, yet never so as to convince his Tenet of falshood, unless the process were groundd upon some First, that is, Self-evident Principle, by virtue of whose undoubtable Certainty the Discourse built on it might gain an establishment. Whence also, the result of this way of Discourse can be onely the Credit or Discredit of the Authours; and touches not at all the Thing; Which, without some Evident Principle to establish or overthrow it, hovers in its pure neutral condition of being (as to Assent or Dissent) just a bare saying and no more.

2. The reason why the First Principle of Controversy

troverſy is not more lookt into and cleared appears to me evidently this, that our modern Diſſenters from the Church and her Faith ſeeing (which is common to Them with all other maintainers of Errours) that to begin with Firſt or ſelf-Evident Principles is the direct road to Science, and therefore abſolutely deſtructive of their Intereſt, avoid as much as in them lies, the laying any ſuch Principles: and inſtead of this apply their whole endeavours to airy Deſcants upon Words, by ſuch means and Arts as are never likely to give them any determinate Senſe; by which craft (the way of Science, being to proceed from one piece of Senſe to another) they carry the war out of the bounds of Science where ſolid ground is to be found to fix ones foot upon, ſo to overthrow or be overthrown, and transfer it to a kind of Spatium Imaginarium of Fancy and unſignifying Sounds, the proper ſphere for Chimerical Diſcourſers to buz confuſedly and make a noiſe in; Where the Catholick muſt either let them alone, and then they cry Victory; or follow them thither, and ſo hazard to prejudice his own cauſe by ſeeming to allow their method of diſcourſing. Whereas indeed the Catholick is ſet by their Importunity exciting his Charity towards the unſkilfull, to ſhow how weakly they diſcourſe in their own ſhallow way.

3. How little faulty the Catholick is in this will be quickly manifeſt, if we conſider that 'tis againſt his Principles and Involuntary in him to
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take this Method: for, he builds not upon those airy Skirmishes for his Faith; nor, consequently, esteems he it conquerable by such attempts: he received his Faith from the present Church witnessing its delivery from the former Age; to this anchorage he sticks; he stands on Immemorial Possession; nor doubts he that Christ's Doctrin is his true and proper Inheritance, while brought down by the testimony of so many Christian Nations. As long as this Foundation stands firm, quirks hurt not him; Shake this, that is, shew the Church Essential is Mistress of falshood, and he must doubt all his Faith; but yet cannot hold the Protestants, for he must hold nothing. No Book can secure him, when that Principle which onely can secure to us Books written long ago, is insecure it self. Now, on the contrary, the Protestant builds his Faith by thus hammering it out of unsenc't Characters, and is quite overthrown (would his will give his reason leave to follow his principles) if another more dexterously fit the words to a sence inconsistent with his. And his hopes of standing are not built (as are the Catholicks) on the Self-evidence of any Thing or Principle, but indeed on the Inevidence or Ambiguity of Words and his Way to manage them; which is, to let no Living Authority sence them, and so they will more easily change their shape as the ingenious contrivances of Fancy molds them; and then, if the discourse seem but a little plausible, Education and Interest make the Understanding content with very easy satisfaction.

4. I am far from blaming the Catholicks prudence for engaging on this manner; I rather admire their Charity towards their weaker Brethren, that at the expence of so much patience and pains, such excellent Wits will condescend to so laborious a task; less sutable both to their own Genius as Catholick, and to the nature of their Cause. How easily might they rest secure upon Immovable Possession, and demand Evidence and Demonstration from the Protestant, who denies his right to Christ's Doctrin? How easily might he show their reasons Inconclusive (which method was observ'd by a late Learned Writer Mr. J. S. against that Pulpit-vapour of Dr. Pierce) especially by discovering the unsatisfactoriness of the Method they take? How most easily, that they have never a Principle or self-evident Ground to begin with; That till they settle such a First Principle all their Discourse is frivolous; That their rejecting the Churches Living Voice or Tradition brings all into doubt, both Sayings of Fathers and Texts of Scripture; And hence, not to allow them the favour of disputing ad hominem from Scripture or Fathers, by granting them any thing Certain, but putting them to prove all; For since they are to object and bring Evident Reason for changing, it lies on them to make their reasons Evident; nor has any Disputant right to have any thing allow'd him Certain, who renounces that Principle, which if renounc't, all is Uncertain: And, lastly, that he who denies the First Principle in any Science, deserves not, nay cannot

cannot in reason (abstracted from circumstances) be discours'd with at all in that Science, nor They in Controversy. This will force them to lay some First or self-evident Principle; which cannot fail to produce these two Advantages; One to the World, that it shall get into a method of concluding something with evidence: The other to Catholick Religion; For, 'twill be found Impossible their Reason strain'd to its utmost, can invent any other in this matter, but that of Tradition.

5. This will clearly shorten our debates, and save the laborious transcribing and Printing Volumes of Testimonies, by bringing Controversy to the way of Reason; for the Certainty of First Authority must needs be manifested by pure Reason. But who am I that I should attempt such a change in the method of Controversy, or think my self a fit proposer or presser of it? Far be it from me. Yet, if I mistake not, Nature her self (whom I second in this design) is about doing that work. For, I hear Catholick Writers complain of the Protestant (and justly too) that he puts him to answer what has been an hundred times said before; and I am inform'd an Eminent Protestant now writing in behalf of Dr. Pierce, makes the same counter-complaint of the Catholick, and the Dissuader begins his book with the same resentment: Besides, I am sure the Best Wits of our Nation are weary of this Method, seeing tis no more but reciprocating a Saw, or transcribing and re-printing what has been done before, onely in another Frame; or, if
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any new production be made, generally tis nothing but some note collected from some Historical book unobserved by others; which, what satisfactory Evidence tis like to bring with it, is easy to be ghest.


6. Now all this happens through not first settling and agreeing in some First Principle. Not onely for the reasons given in the beginning of this Preface; but also, because (as will be shown hereafter) without this the validity of any Testimony from Father or Council cannot be weigh'd, understood, or prest with force upon the Adversary. For, if These be but parts of the Living Voice of the Church Essential of their time, that is, of Christian Tradition, it will follow that till the force of Tradition be evidenc't, Theirs will not be clearly known. Again, Tradition once evidenc't will give principles to distinguish those Citations by, and to secure (as far as is needful) and interpret Scripture's Letter: Whence clear Victory will accrue to Truth, and full Satisfaction to her ingenuous Seekers. Not that I at all doubt, but that many things in Catholick Writers of the Testimonial strain, carry a strong force of Conviction with them; but I see that while the solid Testimonies are not distinguish'd and solely insisted on, but run mixt with others of less force, by such a mixture they weaken their own; I see also that they want their effect upon the Protestant, by reason he is not first prest to admit that Evident Principle on which their strength is built, and, which once settled, they are irresistible.

7. The settling then the First Principle in Controversy

versy being so supremely important, I have attempted it. Putting this Dilemma to the Protestant. Either Controversy (or the skill which enables us to conclude that Christ's Faith is certainly deriv'd down to us,) is a Science, or not; if not, why do we meddle with it; since without Science or Knowledge, all is meer beating the ayr and empty ignorant Talking. If it be, common sense tells us it must be grounded on some First and Self-evident Principle. Let's to work then, and settle this Principle, that so we may have something to agree in and proceed upon; that is, be able to discourse together. I have endeavour'd to show the First Principle we Catholicks proceed on ~~established~~ on rational Grounds, and Self-evident: Let the Protestant either agree with us in it, or settle some other able to render his Citations certain, without which they ought alledge nothing. Nor is it enough for them to catch at single words, or little parcels of my Discourse (as their way is) but, it being connected; they must overthrow the main of it: nor that; but they must lay some First Principle of their own, else they ought affirm nothing, nor speak; for why should any one say what he knows not, or how can he know without Principles; Especially the Protestant is oblig'd to do this, who cannot stand on Possession, but on his Reasons why he mov'd what he found settled. This Principle then they are ty'd by all honest Considerations to produce, and till they do so, I must frankly declare what reason tells ever intelligent man, that those many flashy books of late against Catholicks, by whomsoever written, deserve not a word in Answer.

FIRST DISCOURSE,

*Shewing, from the nature of Rule and Faith,
what Properties belong to the Rule of Faith.*

I.  S common Reason gives it evident, that no satisfaction at all can be had in any point whatever without knowing first the Meaning of those Words which express the Thing under debate, since without this the Discourfers must talk of they know not what; so the Art of Logick assures us that, the Meaning of those Words exactly known, a ready way is open'd to a clear decision of the most perplexing difficulties. For, seeing *the Meaning of a Word* includes in it self *the Nature of the Thing* as signified by that Word, in regard it could not mean *That Thing*, unless it also meant it of *such a Nature* which constitutes *that Thing*, 'tis plain, that the Meaning of the Word once known perfectly, the Nature of the Thing, as signify'd by that word, must be known likewise. Wherefore, since the Nature of the Thing bears along with it all those Considerations and Attributes which intrinsically belong to such a Nature, and excludes all those which are incompetent to the same Nature, it acquaints us with what can be both *said* and *deny'd* of the Thing, as far as express'd by that word. The perfect knowledge then of the Meaning of the Words

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affords us the certain solution of all questions whether Affirmative or Negative, and is the most compendious way to settle all Controversies. Let us therefore apply this method to our present purpose, and examin well what is meant by those Words which express the thing we are discussing, namely **THE RULE OF FAITH**; and we may with good ground expect a solid, clear, and brief satisfaction both of what is *not* that Rule, and what is It.

2. To begin then with what is most evident; Seeing a **RULE** signifies a thing which is able to *regulate* or guide him who uses it, it must consequently have in it all those Qualities by which it is able to do that it's proper Effect; otherwise 'tis no Rule, that is, 'tis not apt or able to do what a Rule should do.

3. It must then in the first place be *Evident as to its Existence*; unto the *Sense*, if it be to guide it; or to the *Understanding* if it be an *Intellectual Rule*. For, how should either of these be guided by what they neither *see* nor *know*?

4. Whence follows that it must be Evident to all those who are to be regulated by it, that there is such a Thing; otherwise it can be to them no Rule; since, being unknown, it reaches not, or affects not those persons who are to be ruled by it; that is, it reaches not those things upon which it is to do its Effect; and so, cannot rule them, or be a Rule to them.

5. Moreover, to those who can raise doubts or
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can have doubts rais'd in them, (that is in a manner all Mankind, even the Rudest Vulgar) it must be knowable that the Intellectual Rule they are to be regulated by, has in it self a virtue to rule or guide their understandings right; That is, they must be capable to know that it deserves to be reli'd on as a Rule. Wherefore, this must either be evident by its own light, or at least easily evidenceable by other knowledges or skills presupposed in those users of Reason who are to be guided by that Rule. Otherwise, 'tis against Sense and Reason to yield over ones understanding to be guided by that which he can never come to understand that it has in it any ability or power to guide him.

6. And, because nothing can be evident to be what in reality it is not, it follows that this Thing pretending to be a Rule, must also be *certain in its self*, or establish'd on secure Grounds: For otherwise, 'tis not possible that can in true sense be call'd a *Rule*, which one may follow and yet go wrong, or be misled. The Directive Power then which it has must not be wavering; Wherefore also the Causes which conserve it to constantly able to perform that Effect must be established too to that degree as to keep it fitting to do the effect proper to its Nature; which is, to be *certain in its self*.

7. Thus much is evidently gathered out of the common Notion or Nature of a *Rule*; That is, out of the genuin and proper meaning of that

single word. We are next to consider the meaning of the word FAITH. By which we intend not to give rigorous School-definitions of either this or the former word; but only to reflect on and make use of some Attributes, Predicates or Properties; which in the sence of such who intelligently use those words are apprehended to be involv'd in, or truly appertaining to their signification. This caution given to avoid mistake or cavil, let's enquire of what kind of Nature that thing is which is meant by this word FAITH, and then reflect what further qualifications it requires in its Rule, that is, in the Certain Means which is to guide us to that Knowledge called Faith.

8. FAITH then in the common sence of Mankind is the same with *Believing*, and *Divine Faith* in the sence of the Generality of Christians (from whom, as being the intelligent users of that word, the true sence of it is taken) *the Believing God in reveal'd Truths*, which necessarily imports some kind of *Knowledge of supernatural Things*. Again, it being evident and held by those Christians that none can come to Heaven without *knowing* there is such a thing; or some very great Good reserv'd for the next life; nor yet without *loving* it, (for none is thought to go to Heaven whether he will or no) which Love, besides the Knowledge that Heaven *is*, cannot be had without knowing likewise that 'tis a Good incomparably greater than any in this life; nor can these Knowledges

ledges be had by *Mankind* but by *Believing*; hence, *Belief of Supernatural things*, or *Faith* is conceived *necessary for the salvation of Mankind*. Nor is this found only in the Judgments the learned Faithful make concerning it by their Discourse, but in the very Meaning of the word *Faith* as it imports *Knowledge of supernatural things*. It being then granted by all and in it self most rational that some at least of the vulgar are to be saved, that is, are to have *Faith* or *Knowledge of God*, it follows that the Rule of Faith or certain means to arrive at Faith must be applicable to them.

9. Moreover, since the ruder or unskillfuller people are, the less capable they are of Science, and none doubts but some, amongst even the rudest, may come to be saved, since we experience they have oftentimes well-meaning, virtuous and devout hearts; the Rule or Means to come to Faith must also be applicable to These; that is, must be such as even the rudest may be capable to know there is such a thing.

10. The Rule of Faith therefore must be Knowable as to its Existence by natural impressions upon mens Senses, affecting their Souls according to the common light of understanding. For, seeing the rudest are very shallow Reflecters and Discourfers, and supposed to be utterly unacquainted with any kind of Skill got by Speculation or Study, the Knowledge of the Rule of

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Faith's Existence must not need any Skill or Science acquir'd by Study, intervening between the natural power of their Understanding and It; otherwise it could not be Knowable by them, or be to them a Rule, by parag. 4th.

11. Again, seeing those who are very rude are yet capable of being put into Doubts concerning their Faith, either by Sophistry or fair Language, and at length deserting it; and 'tis most unreasonable there should be no means left by God sufficient to settle them; nor can any Means be sufficient if the Rule of Faith (which is the best if not only Means to come to the Knowledge of Faith) be dissatisfactory, or impossible to be shown worthy to be rely'd on; it follows that the Rule of Faith must be of such a nature as is either by its own light evidently secure and worthy to be held a Rule, and this even to the rudest who can doubt; or else easily evidenceable to them to be such by intelligent persons who are vers'd in such reflexions, and this out of Principles they are capable of, (as was prov'd parag. the 5th.) that is, requiring onely common and obvious Reason not scientificall speculation to instill them. Otherwise those rude persons would be left unfurnish'd of due Means to be stedfast in their Faith.

12. Also, since the Notion of the word *Faith* bears, that 'tis a perfection of the Soul, or a Virtue, and so no act of it *irrational*, but on the contrary, all its Acts rational, and the submission

sion of our Understandings exercis'd in it *rationabile obsequium*, 'tis evinc't that the Satisfactorines of its Rule, ought not onely to be evident or easily evidenceable to the rudest Doubters, as we now prov'd, but also it ought to be so qualify'd, that the Faithful who yet have no doubts should do rationally even while they simply or unreflectingly adhere to it; and that it should supply to their common and uncultivated Reason by a natural way what it wants of reflexion: I mean, so that the common light of Reason may tell them, upon solid and true Principles taught them by the ordinary course of things in the World, this is to be held or followed, though they dive not into the Grounds or particular Reasons of their tenets or actions, nor can give account of them.

13. And, since our Saviour intended those out of the Church should embrace *Faith*, and those who are to be converted are Heterodox, that is, hold contradictorily to the Church, in what they dissent from her; so that if they change, they must now hold *is*, instead of *is not*, ~~nor is not~~ instead of *is* (there being no middle to hold to) in those points in which they differ from her, and no change ought to be in reason or in a rational Nature (of which Nature those Heterodox are) without true reason to change, and the change in our case is to be made not to a meer Suspension, which is believing nothing, nor to a middle between *is*, and *is not*, but to a contrary or rather

ther contradictory *Assent*, and no Assent can be without sufficient Cause of Assent, nor is any sufficient in reason to put that Effect or cause Assent, in a thing antecedent to Faith, as is the Rule of Faith, but *Evidence*, (for while 'tis but *probable*, that is, while the Understanding must as yet say *I know not it is so*, it cannot say *I know it is so*, which is no more but to say *understandingly* or to *assent* that *it is so*) now the Cause of our actual assenting to the Churches Faith, is the *Rule of Faith*; It follows out of the notion of *Rational* included in the word *Faith*, as apply'd to convertible persons, that the *Rule of Faith* must be beyond all *Peradventures*, how high and presumed soever they be; that is, absolutely *Evident to us*, and consequently CERTAIN.

14. Moreover, there being many Eminent Wits in the Church vers'd in true Logick & enured to Sciences, and true Logick and the course of Science necessarily telling them that nothing can in perfect reason be *held* by one who penetrates difficulties, but either Self evident Principles or Conclusions necessarily deduct by intrinsecal mediums from those Principles, nor can they be necessarily deduced without immediate connexion or Identification of the Terms with the Medium which infers the Identity between themselves in the Conclusion, and that which is not seen to be thus connected is *unknown*, and so, for any thing appears, may be false; and to see a thing may be false, must needs breed some Fear
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of being so, or Doubt, if we be concern'd in the Truth or Falsity of that thing, and none can rationally assent or fix their judgment where there is left some Doubt or wavering of Judgment, and the Judgment or Assent of Faith must be *rational*; It follows, that the Rule of Faith, (which is the immediate Producer and Cause of the Assent of Faith) ought to be of that Nature that it must not onely be plain to the ruder sort, but also contain in it self Seeds of *perfect evidence* to satisfy those learned Persons who shall more narrowly examin it: Otherwise the best and wisest portion, and as it were the flower of Mankind, which guide themselves by perfect reason, could *hold* nothing or have no Faith; That is the Church must onely be made up of ignorant and undiscerning persons; which would make her little better than a Congregation of Fanaticks.

15. Especially, the Church having many Adversaries skill'd in natural Sciences, who will not stick to oppose her all they can, and conquer her too, could they take any just advantage against her; and no greater advantage being possible to be gained or more deadly wound to be given her than to prove her Faith *uncertain*, which is done by showing the Ground of it as far as concerns our Knowledge, that is the Rule and Means to come to Faith, possible to be false; for this at once enervates her Government, vilifies her Sacraments, weakens all the motives to the love of Heaven, which she proposes, and by consequence quite

quite enfeebles the vigour of Christian Life; or rather, this made manifest, by reason of temptations to the Love of Creatures perpetually and on all sides besieging us, endangers to extinguish it utterly; and, lastly, makes Christians the most ridiculous people in the world to believe such high mysteries above their reasons upon uncertain Grounds: Tis manifest therefore that the only safeguard and all the strength of the Church and Christian Religion is placed in the absolute Certainty of the Rule of Faith: Tis made therefore and ordain'd to ascertain Faith; that is, it has in it what is fit for this end; that is, it is of its own nature *absolutely certain*; that is, absolute Certainty is found in the nature and notion of the *Rule of Faith*; or, which is all one, is signified or meant by those words throughly understood.

16. And lastly, Faith being a Virtue mainly conducing to Bliss (as is seen §. 8.) and its Influence towards Bliss (which we call its *Merit*) consisting in this that it makes us submit our Understandings to the Divine Veracity and by that means adhere unwaveringly to such Truths as raise us to Heaven; so that the Divine Authority apply'd is the Principal Cause or Motive of this submission, assent or adhesion; and every Cause producing its effect better and stronglier by how much the nearer and closer 'tis apply'd, and all the application of it to us consisting in the Rule of Faith, whose office it is to derive down to us those

those doctrines Christ taught and to assure us that Christ said them; and the application of a thing closely to a Judging Power being perform'd by *Certifying* it, which makes it *sink* into it and become an intimate Act of that Power, whereas Uncertainty can only admit it to swim as it were upon the surface of the Soul, much after the manner of a bare Proposal or simple apprehension, or at best as a Probability, not having weight enough of motive to settle deep into its solid substance which is Cognoscitive and so become there a fixt Judgement; it follows that the Virtue of Faith and its Merit are incomparably advantaged by the absolute Certainty of the Rule of Faith and very feeble and inefficacious without it. This Rule then must be *absolutely-Certain* of its own nature, that is, the notion of *absolutely-Certain* is involv'd in the Rule of Faith.

17. Summing up then the full account of our Discourse hitherto it amounts to this that out of the genuine meaning of the word *Rule* which as used by us denotes an *Intellectual Rule*, and much more out of the meaning of the word *Faith* it is clearly evinc't that the Rule of Faith must have these several conditions; namely, it must be plain and self-evident as to its Existence to all (§ 3, 4, 9, and 10. and Evidenceable as to its Ruling Power to enquirers even the ruder vulgar (§ 5, & 11.) apt to settle & justify undoubting persons (§ 12.) to satisfy fully the most Sceptical Dis-senters

senters (§ 13.) and rational Doubters (§ 14.) and to convince the most obstinate and acute Adversaries, (§ 15.) built upon unmoveable Grounds, that is Certain in it self, (§ 6. 15, 16.) and absolutely ascertainable to us (§ 5, 11, 13, 14.)

SECOND DISCOURSE.

Showing the two first Properties of the Rule of Faith utterly incompetent to Scripture.

1. **H**AVING attained so clear a Description of the *Rule of Faith* and acquaintance with it by particular marks, we may with reason conceive good hopes of knowing it when we meet it : Especially, not having a great croud from which we are to single it out, the pretenders to that title being very few; and, indeed, but two are owned, namely Tradition and Scripture; though if we look narrowly into it, the Private Spirit, Private Reason, Testimonies of Fathers, or whatever else is held the ascertainment of Scripture's sense ought to have a place among the pretenders to be the Rule of Faith; since 'tis those which are thought to give the relies on them all the security they have of *Gods sense*, that is, of Points of Faith, and so are or ought to be to them a Rule of Faith.

2. But,

2. But, to speak to them in their own Language who say Scripture is their Rule, we must premise this Note, that they cannot mean by *Scripture* the *Sence* of it, that is, the things to be known; for those they confess are the very Points of Faith, of which the Rule of Faith is to ascertain us: When they say then that *Scripture is the Rule of Faith*, they can onely mean by the word SCRIPTURE, that Book not yet *senc't* or interpreted, but as yet *to be senc't*; that is, such and such Characters in a Book with their Aptness to signify to them assuredly Gods Mind, or ascertain them of their Faith: For, abstracting from the *sence* or *actual signification* of those words, there is nothing imaginable left but those *Characters* with their *Aptness* to signify it.

This understood, let us apply now the Properties of the Rule of Faith to Scriptures Letter, that we may see how they will fit.

3. And the first thing that occurs is its Existence or *Quest*; that is, whether those Books pretended to be Gods Word be indeed *Scripture*, that is, written by men divinely inspired; Of which 'tis most manifest the very rudest sort cannot be Certain by Self-evidence; nor can it be easily evidenceable to those Doubters that are the ordinary sort of the Vulgar by any skill they are capable of; nor even to more curious and speculative Searchers but by so deep an inspection into the *sence* of it as shall discover such secrets that Philosophy and Human Industry could

could never have arrived to. Besides, all the seeming Contradictions must be solved ere they can out of the bare nature of the Letter conclude the Scripture to be of Gods enditing, and so worthy to be a Rule; to solve which literally, plainly and satisfactorily, the memories of so many particulars, which made them clearer to those of the Age in which they were written and the matter known, must needs be so worn out by tract of time, that 'tis one of the most difficult tasks in the World. The Scripture's Letter then is not the Rule of Faith (by § 3, 4, 5, 10, 11. of our former Discourse) as wanting Self-evidence of its Existence, Easy Evidenceableness of its Ruling Virtue, and Power to establish and satisfy at least unlearned Doubters.

4. Secondly, were it known that there are some Books left written by men divinely inspired, yet it is unknown how many those Books ought to be, and which of the many controverted ones may securely be put in that Catalogue, which not: Which 'tis most palpable that either few or at least the rude vulgar and common sort of Mankind, (especially those who are not yet Faithful, but looking to come to Faith, which is done by knowing *the Rule of Faith*) can never be assured of, either by Self-evidence of the things themselves, or by other skills they are already possess of. The Scripture's Letter then is from this Head concluded defective in the forementioned Properties necessarily belonging to the Rule of Faith.

5. Thirdly,

5. Thirdly, Were the Catalogue of the true Books known, yet how is it self-evident or easily evidenceable to the capacities above named (if to any) that the very Original or a perfectly true Copy of these Books was preserved indefinitely entire, out of which our Translations were made? Can the ruder sort either know this or be assured of the skill of others by which They know it? The former being manifestly impossible; the later equally such; since they have no knowledges in their heads enabling them to judge unerringly of the competency of others skill in such a particular. Wherefore, Scriptures Letter faulters still in the primary, most necessary and essential conditions of a *Rule of Faith*.

6. Fourthly, Were it evident that the right Original or true Copy of it is preserved indefectively, yet very few, that is, onely those who are perfect in those ancient Languages, can arrive to the understanding so much; The rest, which are in a manner all Mankind, must come to the knowledge of it by Translations; and, ere they can think it is fit to be a Rule, they must know it is rightly translated; For which, because they have no skill in those Languages themselves, they must rely on the Translators skill: Concerning whose sufficiency of understanding to be able to translate unerringly right, and honesty of Will or true intention to do it, themselves, at least the rudest vulgar, are not qualified enough to judge

judge assuredly, that they are worthy to be securely relied on. So that we are still at a loss in this pretended Rule of Faith for our first and most fundamental conditions.

7. Fifthly, Let us pass by all these defects, and grant it most truly translated to a tittle (and indeed to a tittle it should be, else an error may slip in, instead of a Point of Faith, for any thing the bare Letter can assure us) yet the innumerable Copiers before Printing, and since Printers and Correcters of the Press are still to be relied on: and they onely can have evidence of the right Letter of Scripture, who stood at their elbows attentively watching they should not erre in making it perfectly like a former Copy; And even then why might they not mistrust their own eyes and aptness to oversee? Or, were it granted these men err'd not, nor themselves in overlooking them, yet the same difficulty occurs concerning the former Printer's care if the former Copy were printed, or the Scriveners if Manuscript, which escapes the view of our now-livers, except we will examin them again from Impression to Impression, or from Copy to Copy, by others more ancient; and still let us run as high as we will the same difficulty pursues us. To which if we add that the Printers, Correcters or Transcribers might hap to be Knaves, and either be Hereticks themselves or brib'd by Hereticks, whose manner it being ever to make the Letter of the Scripture their weapon, they
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could wish no greater advantage than to have it fram'd commodious to their hand, and so would questionless endeavour it; and History assures us they did. So that we are still at the same, or a greater, loss in our pretended Rule of Faith.

8. Lastly, were all this multitude of Exceptions pardon'd, still we are as far to seek, unless those who are to be rul'd and guided by the Scripture's Letter to Faith were Certain of the true *Sence* of it, which is found out by right Interpretation. Now the numerous Comments writ upon it and infinite disputes about the sence of it even in most concerning points, as in that of Christ's Divinity, bear it out so plain to us that this is not the task of the vulgar (who yet are capable of Salvation, and so of Faith, and so of the Rule of Faith) that 'tis perfect phrenzy to deny it.

9. It may be alledg'd that some of these defects may be provided against by skill in History. But 'tis quickly reply'd, that then none can be secure of their Rule of Faith, nor consequently have Faith, unless skill'd in Histories or knowing those men to be so, and withall unbyass'd, whom they converse with; nay, without knowing that those men knew certainly the Historians whom they rely'd on had secure Grounds, and not bare Hearsay for what they writ, and that they were not contradicted by others, either extant or perisht: now, how few of the unlearned vulgar, nay even of the middle sort of prudent men
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which make up the Generality of the world, I may say of very good Scholars, can judge of these points? And, if they cannot, how then is their Faith rational or virtuous, and not rather an hair-brain'd opinionative rashness to build their Assent, Faith and Salvation upon Principles they can make no Judgment of?

10. If necessity make some willing to reply what their Judgments naturally flowing from their Principles would not, that *God assists his Church*, and therefore his Providence will take care the contingencies their Rule of Faith, the Scripture's Letter, is subject to; shall be avoided; 'tis ask'd, how they are certain, in their way, of such an Assistance, but by the Letter of the Scripture? They must first then prove that Certain, ere they mention the Church or God's Assistance to her; since this Assistance is, in their Grounds, founded upon the Truth and Certainty of that Letter. Besides, a Church is a Congregation of the Faithful, that is, of such as have *Faith*; which not being possible to be had without Certain means to come unto it; or the *Rule of Faith*; it follows that the first thing that must be clear'd is the *Certainty-of-the-Rule-of-Faith*; antecedently to the Notions of *Faith*, *Faithful* or *Church*.

11. If Testimonies out of *Councils* or Fathers be alledg'd by them sufficient Interpreters of Scripture, 'tis reply'd that, if those be needful to make a Certain Interpretation of Scripture, or
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(which is all one) the Letter of Scripture certainly significative of God's Sence ; then, First, none can be capable of the Rule of Faith, nor consequently of Faith, but those who are read in Councils and Fathers: nor yet, unless those Authorities be held Infallible in such an office ; which none but Catholiks will say ; for if they can err in such a performance, how shall we be certain they do not err in each particular Interpretation, without some other Guide to establish them and secure us ; which Guide must be infallible in such an affair, else the same question and doubt returns concerning It : And, if there be some other infallible Guide whose constant direction secures them from erring in every particular Interpretation and ascertains us of the same, let them name It, not Fathers and Councils to interpret Scripture by. But the third and most Fundamental fault is that a *Father*, as the word is commonly us'd, and now taken by us, signifies not a *Doctor* or learned Deducer of Consequences by human learning, nor a *Commentator* upon Scripture, nor a *Preacher* or Homily-maker (for so every Doctor, Commentator and Preacher would be a *Father*) but an *Eminent and Knowing Witnesser to Posterity of the Sence and Faith of the Church* which he received : The notion then of CHURCH is presuppos'd to the knowledge of what is meant by the word *Father*, or to the notion of a Father. Again, a *Council* signifies a *Representative of the Church*, whence,

'tis Relative to what it represents, and so its meaning cannot be known unless that others to which it relates be first understood; nor can it be a true and right Council unless what it represents be a true Church. Both *Council* therefore and *Father* presuppose the notion of *Church*; *Church* presupposes the notion of *Faithful*; *Faithful* the notion of *Faith*; *Faith*, of the *Rule of Faith*; 'Tis most evident then that, in the way of generating Faith, the knowledge of the *Rule of Faith* is antecedent to the knowledge of all these; and so none of these can help one, who discourses orderly and rationally, to the Knowledge of the Rule of Faith, unless accidentally; as it may happen a Father may be a Doctor or great Schollar; and so by a rational discourse opening the meanings of the words (or, which is all one, the notion or nature of the Things) give us insight to know what it is which has the properties of such a Rule. In vain therefore do they strive to piece out the sufficiency of Scripture's Letter to be the Rule of Faith by those helps; since the being of that Rule is presuppos'd entire in its self before *their* existence, and indeed is that which gives them all the Being they have.

12. Some may reply that Fundamentals are clear in Scripture. But, first, a certain Catalogue of Fundamentals was never given and agreed to by sufficient Authority; and yet without this all goes to wrack; since the neglecting

lecting or not-knowing which be Fundamental hazards to ruine all : For the discourse grows ticklish when we talk of *Fundamentals* ; this very word importing that any one left out or mistaken overthrows the whole End of Faith to those which miscarry in it. Secondly , is it a Fundamental that Christ is God ? If so, I ask whether this be clearer in Scripture than that God has hands, feet, nostrils and passions like ours ? Seeing then the appearing clearness of the Scripture's letter in this later point is certain to lead vulgar heads into exceeding great Errours, and that Heresies are as seemingly clear in the outward face of it as Fundamental Truths, how mistaken a Principle do they relie upon for the main hinge of their salvation, who say that Fundamentals are so clear in Scripture's Letter to every capacity !

THIRD DISCOURSE.

That the Three next Properties of the Rule of Faith are utterly Incompetent to Scripture.

1. **T**HUS much to show that the Letter of Scripture wants the two first and most Fundamental Conditions of a Rule of Faith; being neither Evident as to its Existence to *all*, nor Evidenceable as to its Ruling Power to Unlearned Enquirers. Let us proceed to the third Property, namely, its *Aptness to settle and justify those unlearned persons who rely undoubtingly upon it*, such as are the meaner sort of the Vulgar, who take things by course as they fall, in a natural kind of way without reflecting upon them and their reasons.

2. Since then no Man or rational Creature can be justifiable either for Assent or Practice but by proceeding upon some Principles, and such as, to his best judgment, he takes to be true ones, and those Principles can be but of two sorts, *viz.* either inbred in him by the ordinary Light of Nature, call'd *Common Sense*, or got by some reflexion; and that the persons we speak of are such as proceed undoubtingly, that is, without occasion to reflect; 'tis left that what can justify them must be Principles of *Common Sense*. Seeing then 'tis both against all Principles of *Common Sense* to judge that themselves have
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any self-assurance of the Scripture's Letter, knowing themselves utterly ignorant when 'twas writ, by whom, how brought down, &c. and equally senceless to *believe* a multitude which sayes it may possibly erre in what it tellsthem, it follows that they are left unjustify'd, nay condemn'd by Common Sence in absolutely *believing* such a Rule; That is, condemn'd by the best judgments they are Masters and capable of. This, I say, follows in case this multitude be truly dealt with, and that the Teachers give them a sincere account of their own Tenet. Nay, should these men say they cannot erre in such a matter, by reason of their great Scholarship, as skill in History, Languages, reading of Fathers, Councils, and such like, yet even then they could not afford them credit to such a degree as to build their hopes of salvation on their word; in regard those Learned mens Profession is not of plain Sensations by their Eyes and Ears which the vulgars experience capacitates them to judge of, but of such high skills as Unlearned men know not what to make of, and even understand not what the very words which expresse them mean. The best they can do then is to hope that perhaps those men may have some such strange skill; in the same manner as they trust to other Tradesmen and Artists they have heard well of or seen some of their work; or rather not near so much; seeing their Senses give them a far better know-

ledge of these Handycraftsmen's skill by the Effects and their fitness for the use intended, than their uncultivated Reason can give them of the goodness of Christian Doctrin and its proportion to Bliss. But the main is, when they shall hear and see many several Professions all pretending to Scripture, yet all differ, damn and condemn one another, perhaps persecute one another and fight about Religion, and themselves unable to judge which is most to be trusted; what can common Sense dictate to them but an inextricable blunder! and onely clear to them thus much that that can never be the way which many follow and yet many must needs be misled: Their most vulgar reason easily telling them that there can be but *one* Truth, that is, that all the other Professors to follow Scripture do notwithstanding believe and speak *false*. Now, these honest Scholars of plain down-right Nature, & that of her lowest form too, being unable to judge which truly follow the Scripture's Letter, and onely capable to know they all profess it with Words and Actions expressing the greatest seriousness in the world; are to think that all equally meant to follow it to their power. Whence, their common reason will tell them (though they cannot express it in our terms, or defend it) that meerly for want of Light, that is Evidence in the Directive Power of that Rule, they all but one party (and perhaps that too as well as the rest) go most miserably astray. This third Property then

then of the Rule of Faith, namely, *to justify the undoubting vulgar*, is wanting to Scripture's Letter.

3. There follows the fourth Property of the Rule of Faith, which is, that it must be *able* of its own nature *to satisfy the most Sceptical Dissenters and Rational Doubters* that the Doctrine it holds forth came from Christ. To make a true conceit of what may be judg'd sufficient for this End, let us reflect on the nature and temper of such Dissenters and Doubters; and we shall quickly discover that they are men given to stir their thoughts by much reflexion and to call them to a strict account ere they yield them over to Assent: Wherefore, if we suppose them true to their own thoughts and not to betray the Light of their Reason to some Passion (in which case their Faith it self were in them a Vice) we cannot imagin that any thing under Demonstration can bind and restrain those active and volatile Souls from fluttering still in Objections and hovering in doubts when their Eternal Good is concern'd: Especially, when any Authority is about scanning, upon whose word they are bound, after they have approv'd it, to believe unconceivable and unheard of things, above the reach of human Reason & Apprehension. Let now any man go about to demonstrate to those great wits these points, That the Scripture's Letter was writ by men divinely inspir'd, That there is never a *real* one however there may be many *seeming*

ing Contradictions in it, and this to be shown out of the very Letter it self; That just this Catalogue or number of Books is enough for the Rule of Faith, and no one Necessary that was lost, none be abated; or, if so, how many; That the Originals out of which the Translations were made, were entire and uncorrupted; That the first Translations were skilfully & rightly made, and afterwards deriv'd down sincere, notwithstanding the errableness of thousands of Transcribers, Printers, Correcters, &c. and the malice of antient Hereticks and Jews who had it in their hands: And, lastly, That *this*, and *this onely* is the true Sence of it; to which is requisit great skill in *Languages* to understand the meaning of words; in *Grammar*, to know what meaning they should generally bear according to its Rules as thus construed or put together; *Criticism*, to know what a word does most commonly or may possibly signify by rules of nicer Etymologies or acception of Authours ancient or modern, by dialects of several Countries, &c. *History*, to make known the true scope of the Authour, the best Interpreter of his meaning; *Logick*, to draw consequences aright and so find out the thread of the discourse, to avoid equivocation in words by discovering which are to be taken properly, which Metaphorically; And, to apply this right, some skill in the things themselves, that is, in *Nature* and *Metaphysicks*, especially that which treats of

of the nature of Spirits, as the Soul, Angels, God and his Attributes; but especially in *Divinity* both Speculative and Moral; which (by the way) supposes Faith and comes after it, and so cannot be presuppos'd to the Rule of Faith which precedes it. Let any man, I say, go about to demonstrate all these difficult Points to those acute men, and will they not smile at his endeavors? since most of them that concern the truth of the Letter are such that we want Principles to go about to evidence them; and the rest so obscure that a searching and sincere wit would still find something to reply to rationally, or at least maintain his ground of Suspence with a *Might it not be otherwise?* And, were some one or two of these points demonstrable, yet who sees not it is a task of so long study that a great part of a man's life would be spent in a wearisome and hopeless endeavour to come to Faith by this tedious method; which would both disinvite to a pursuit; and even a diligent man may in likelihood die ere he could rationally embrace any Faith at all. Faith then being intended for a man to lead his life by, 'tis necessary its Rule and the means to come to it should be easily victorious, by reason of its Certainty and Evidence, over the shock of Doubts or the assaults of Intellectual Fears. In which Scripture's Letter being defective, 'tis plain that 'tis far from the Nature of a Rule of Faith.

4. The same discourse holds to prove that the Scripture's

Scripture's Letter is not *convictive of the most obstinate and acute Adversaries*, which is the fifth Property of the Rule of Faith. Yet, to apprehend this more lively, let us imagin it apply'd to practice, and that some Text of Scripture were quoted to convince a *Deist* in some point. He asks how you are certain that Book is God's word? You alledge the Excellencies of it; which indeed are such that eyes already enlighten'd by true Faith may discern something in it above nature, and cry, *Digitus Dei est hic*, though not his dim sight: He answers that many parts of it are indeed very excellently good, but that the Devil can transform himself into an Angel of Light. On the other side he requites your Excellencies with many strange Absurdities and Heresies even by your own confession in the open Letter as it lies, and most unworthy God; as that he has hands feet and and passions like ours according to which he is variable. He finds you direct Texts against acknowledg'd Science in divers particulars, and reckons up a multitude of Contradictions even in your own Judgment. You answer that those places are understood according to human-apprehension, and are indeed incompetent to God; but, that they are mystical and spiritual meanings couch't in those sacred Oracles, which with the help of History would reconcile those seeming Contradictions. He cries, you quite abandon your pretended Rule, that since you confess Heresies are in the open Letter taken as it lies,

lies, you must have some Knowledge in your Head concerning God which makes you decline the sence of the words as they lie and run to gloss them; and demands whence you came by those tenets which oblige you to correct the plain Letter; challenging your thoughts and carriage as witnesses that that which imbu'd you antecedently with those contrary Tenets, not the Scripture's Letter, was your true Rule of Faith; in regard you frame It according to the Interest of those fore-held Tenets. He pressingly therefore demands whence you had those Tenets or Points of Faith by which you guide your self in adhering or not adhering to the Scripture's Letter as it lies?

5. If you say, from other places of Scripture controlling plainly the others; he replies, this can onely make you acknowledge Scripture's Letter plainly contradicts it self, and so leaves you doubtful which side to hold, as far as the bare Letter carries you; or, if it invites you to any thing, 'tis to hold both sides of the contradiction. What therefore he still demands is, what it is which forelaid those Judgements in you by which you were byast beyond the power of the Letters Indifferency to hold one side rather than the other? Here you are at a loss with your pretence of the Letter's Authority, being gone beyond it. If then you recur to Reason and Science, teaching you that God is Immutable, a Spirit, &c. he straight replies, Then that Science taught you that Point whether Scripture
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had been or no. *It* therefore was your Rule in this, (and the same may be said of what-ever you avail your self to interpret Scripture by) not the *Letter*. If you say you rely on the Science or Skill of your Parents, Forefathers, and Pastours, then their Skill which ascertain'd them of Gods sence (not Scripture's Letter) was their Rule, and so is likewise yours ; for whoever relies on any precisely as Skilful, relies in very deed and properly on their Skill, and not on the Letter their skill works upon. Besides, one not skilful himself, is a bad Judge how far anothers skill extends. If you say you relie not on their skill, (fallible perhaps in them, and obscure to you) but on their Senses enabling them to be knowing Witnesses of what was deliver'd them, and free from the former exceptions, you are driven for your last refuge to *Tradition*, and still desert your Letter-Rule. In a word, he challenges the consciousness of your most inward thoughts, whether (however in Controversies against others you quote Scripture, yet) in reading the Letter for your own Faith, you bring not along with you some thoughts to interpret it by, which you are resolved to hold to ; and so the Scriptures Letter lies before you as matter to work on, so as to preserve it significative of what you judge sound, and not to frame your Judgments by ; that is, you use it as a thing *ruled*, not as a *Rule*. Nay more, if you look narrowly into the bottome of those Thoughts, you shall discover the natural

ral method of Tradition to have at unawares settled your Judgments concerning Faith, and actually guid you in the Interpretation; however, when your other Concerns awake design in you, you protest against it, and seem perhaps to your unreflecting self to embrace and hold to the meer guidance of the Letter.

6. Again, Waving the insufficiency of the Scripture's Letter to declare its own sence, he asks this smart question, how you are certain of the Truth of the Letter in this very Text; and demands your certain proof or demonstration either for the Thing, or for the Certainty of the Authority upon which you hold that any particular Text you alledge is truly a part of the Scripture's Letter, and not foisted in, or some way altered in its significativeness: or, how you know by the diligence of the Letter-examiners, if it be a negative Proposition, that the particle *not* was not inserted; if affirmative, not left out. You alledge Consent of all our Copies: He replies, first, that this onely argues that those ancient Copies whence ours came were *alike* (perhaps not so much) but who knows or can undertake that they were not *alike faulty*, or *alike Unlike* the true Original? or, that there were not some in those dayes which never came to our knowledge, different from ours in the very point between us? In a word, that all depends on the Truth of the Copies immediately taken from the Original, or the very next to them; which, what they were,
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by whom taken, where and how preserved from time to time, how narrowly examin'd when they were first transcrib'd, and such like, is so buried in obscurity and oblivion, and so far from Evidence apt to beget Certain Knowledge, that we must have recourse to Charity to allow it our Hopes, had we no other Rule of Faith than that bare Letter. Again, though human diligence *did* play its part, yet it is acknowledg'd (says your Deist) that there are almost innumerable *Varia Lectiones* in it still controverted; nay so many in the new Testament alone observed by one man (my Lord *Usher*) that he durst not print them for fear of bringing the whole Book into doubt; and, why may not there have been such formerly and now blindly determin'd and swallow'd in each Text that concerns our mainest Points of Faith. If you reply (as Nature will lead you) that the Faith of Christ believ'd and taught from Father to Son was writ in the hearts of the Faithful; and this made them both able and willing to (that is, actually did) preserve the Letter from Errour in any passage that concern'd the Body of Christian Doctrin; he challenges you to fly your Colours, to desert your own Rule, and embrace Tradition, the Rule of Roman-Catholicks; and lastly, that you make Scriptures Letter the *thing Ruled*, not the *Rule*: Yet, without this recourse, no satisfactory account can possibly be render'd to a strict Examiner why Errour might not creep into the Text in substan-

tial points of Faith as well as in less concerning passages : Which devolves to this, that Scripture's Letter held forth as a Rule of Faith *can never convince an obstinate and acute Adversary.*

FOURTH DISCOURSE,

That the Two last Properties of the Rule of Faith are clearly incompetent to Scripture.

I. **T** Here remain the two last Conditions; *Certainty in its self, and Ascertainableness to us.* That the later is incompetent to Scripture alone or unassisted by another certain Rule, that is, incompetent to it as a *Rule*, however it may agree to it as a thing regulated or *ruled*, is the Subject in a manner of all our foregoing Discourse, and it so depends upon the former Property of the two last named, *Certainty in it self*, that if *it* fails, that later is impossible. Now, as for its *Certainty in its self* or its being establish'd on secure Grounds, we may consider Scripture's Letter either Materially as such and such Characters, or Formally as Significant of a determinate sense suppos'd to be Christ's; and both of these either in its single *self*, or as dependent on *other* helps or Causes on foot now in the world according to the course of things.

2. And, as for the meer material Characters in Books, tis evident that they are, of themselves, as liable to be destroy'd as any thing else in Nature; as burnt, torn, blotted, worn out, &c, Which though it seems a remote and impertinent Exception, yet to one who considers the wise Dispositions of Divine Providence it will deserve a deep Consideration. For, seeing the Salvation of Mankind is the End of God's making Nature, the Means to it ought to be more settled, strong and unalterable than any other piece of Nature whatever; Putting then Scripture's Letter to be this Rule, and that all its Significativeness of God's Sence, that is all its virtue of a Rule, is lost if the material Characters, its Basis, be destroy'd or alter'd; who sees not a very disorderly proceeding in laying so *weak means* in such immediateness to so *main an end*; and concludes not thence that Faith's Rule ought in right reason have a better Basis than such perishable and alterable Elements?

3. Reflecting next on those Material Characters in complexion with the Causes actually laid in the world to preserve them intire, we shall find that either those Causes are Material, and then themselves are also liable to continual alterations and innumerable Contingencies; or Spiritual, that is, men's Minds. Now, these being the noblest pieces in Nature, and freed in part from Physical mutability by their Immateriality, we may with good reason hope for a
greater

greater degree of Constancy from them than from any other; and indeed, for a perfect Unalterableness from their Nature, and (this being to conceive Truth) an Inerrableness, if due circumstances be observ'd; that is, if due proposals be made to beget Certain Knowledge, and due care us'd to attend to such Proposals: Otherwise their very Createdness and Finiteness entitle them to Defectibility, besides their obnoxiousness to mutation and perpetual alteration through the alloy of their material Compartment. I call it *due proposal* when it must necessarily affect the Sense, and so beget *natural Knowledge*; or when unequivocal terms are so immediately and orderly laid, that the Conclusion must as necessarily be seen in the Premises as that the same thing cannot both be and not-be at once, by a mind inur'd to reflexion and speculation; and I call that *due care*, which preserves the Soul in such temper as permits the objects impression to be heeded, and the Mind to be affected by it.

4. This premised we may reflect that the Rule of Faith as was prov'd (*Disc. I. §. 4, 5, 10, 11.*) must be obvious to men of ordinary Sense, and not onely to Speculators; as also, that Objects of the Senses may be of two sorts; Of the first are things in Nature, or else simple vulgar actions and plain matters of Fact; which, if oft repeated and familiariz'd, are unmistakable, and consequently the perceiver inerrable in such

a matter; Of the second are such actions as are compounded and made up of an innumerable multitude of several particularities to be observed, every of which may be mistaken apart, each being a distinct little action in its single self; Such as is the transcribing a whole book, consisting of such myriads of words, single Letters, and Tittles, or Stops, and the several actions of writing over each of these so short and cursory, that it prevents diligence and exceeds human care to keep awake and apply distinct attentions to every of these distinct actions. And yet, to do our Opposers right, I doubt not but each of these failings may possibly be provided against by oft-repeated Corrections of many sedulous and sober examiners set apart for that business, and that the truth of the Letter of an whole Book might to a very great degree, if not altogether, be ascertain'd to us; were the Examiners of each Copy known to be very numerous, prudent and honest, and each of them testifying his single examination of it word by word; For then the difficulty, consisting in the multiplicity and the variety, is provided against by the multitude of the preserving Causes; and their multifariousness made convictive to us by their well-testify'd consent.

5. To apply this discourse to the matter in hand. If we were Certain there had been anciently a multitude of Examiners of the Scripture's Letter in each Copy taken from the first
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Original or the next Copies from these and so forwards, with the exact care we have declar'd, their single Examinations of each and the amendment of the Copy according to their Examinations convincingly testify'd, and that by Excommunication or heavy Ecclesiastical Prohibitions and Mulcts it had been provided for from the beginning that none should presume to take a Copy of it, and that Copy be permitted to be read or seen till it were thus examined ; much might have been said for the Certainty of the Scripture's Letter upon these mens Principles ; But, if no such Orders or Exactness was ever heard of, especially of the New Testament upon the Truth of whose Letter they build Christian Faith ; If the multitudes of Letters, Commaes, blottings or illegibleness of the Originals, like-appearance of Letters and even whole Words in the Book, like-sounding in the ear or fancy of the Transcriber, possibility of misplacing, omitting, inserting, &c. did administer very fruitful occasions to human oversight ; If, the more Copies were taken, the more the errours were like to grow, and the farther from correcting ; If Experience testifies no such exact diligence has been formerly us'd, by the diverse Readings of several Copies now extant, and thousands of Corrections which have lately been made of the Vulgar Edition, the most universally currant perhaps of any other ; what can we say but that (for any thing these Principles afford) Scripture's

Letter may be Uncertain in every tittle, notwithstanding the diligence which has *de facto* been used to preserve it uncorrupted in the way of those who hold it the onely Rule of Faith? *In their way*, I say, who will not have the Sense of Christ's Doctrin writ in Christians hearts the Rule for the Correcters of the Letter to guide themselves by; but the meer Letter of a former (and God knows, controvertible) Copy, out of which the Transcription and by which onely the Examination is made. What Certainty accrues to Scripture's Letter by the means of Tradition, or the living voice of the present Church in each Age, is the Subject of another enquiry.

6. Now, as for the *Certainty* of the Scripture's *Significativeness*, which is the other Branch, nothing is more evident than that this is quite lost to all in the Uncertainty of the Letter; and as evident that 'tis unattainable by the vulgar, that is the better half of mankind, since they are unfurnisht of those Arts and Skills, as Languages, Grammar, Logick, History, Metaphysicks, Divinity &c. requisit to establish and render Certain the sense they conceive the Letter ought to bear; without which they can never make such an Interpretation of it but an acute Scholler skill'd in those means will be able to blunder theirs, and make a seeming clearer one of his own. In a word, if we see eminent Wits of the Protestants and the Socinians, making use of the self same, and, as they conceive, the best advantages

tages the Letter gives them, as Comparing places and such like, and availing themselves the best they can by acquir'd skills, yet differ in so main points as those of the B. Trinity and Christ's Divinity; what Certainty can we undertakingly promise to weaker heads, that is, to the Generality of Mankind, less able to make such fit allusions of places to one another; incapable of such means as should help them, which the other had and are very pertinent and proper to work upon the Letter; And, lastly, who are, for want of those, unfurnish'd of any steady Principles to settle their Judgments and rationally determin their own Interpretation Certain. Scripture's Letter therefore is not *Certain in it's self*, that is, has no immoovably secure Grounds enabling it to perform the Office of the *Rule of Faith*, or to guide Mankind in their way to Faith with a rational assuredness.

Our Conclusion then is this, that SCRIPTURE'S LETTER WANTS ALL THE FOREMENTIONED PROPERTIES BELONGING TO THE RULE OF FAITH.

7. Lest any should misconstrue my former Discourse, I declare here once more that, in a great part of it, I argue *ad hominem*; that is, I manifest what must follow out of the Principles

ples of those who hold the Scriptures Letter the *Rule of Faith*, not out of my own or Catholick ones. I declare likewise that I with all reverence acknowledge such Excellencies in those Sacred Oracles as would task the tongues both of Men and Angels to lay them forth. I onely contest that the Scripture's Letter is most improper and never intended for the *Rule of Faith*; as is easy to be evinc't against an unobstinate Adversary by this, that 'tis known the Apostles and their Successors went not with Books in their hands to preach and deliver Christ's Doctrin, but Words in their mouths; and that Primitive Antiquity learn't their Faith by another Method a long time before many of those Books were universally spread amongst the vulgar, much less the Catalogue collected and acknowledg'd: Till the Revolters from that Method and Rule, being manifestly convinc't of Novelty by it, were forc't to invent some other, and chose this of the Scripture's Letter for most plausible, as being held very Sacred; untill, by straining it to an undue use, and, to please the people, putting it without any distinction of the person, into their hands, and leaving it to their Interpretation, they have brought it (as 'tis made use of for a Rule of Faith) to the vilest degree of contempt; every silly upstart Heresy fathering it self upon It. Of which no Nation in the world is so evident an Instance as our miserable Country, distracted into so many Sects (all issuing from that Principle,) so impossible

possible to be brought under Ecclesiastical Government (and even with much ado under Temporal) that 'tis wonderful such proper Effects, especially so sensible, burthensome, so universally spread, and so continual, should not long ago have abundantly demonstrated their Proper Cause, and oblig'd them to renounce that Principle which is the necessary Parent of such ruinous and unredressable disorders.

FIFTH DISCOURSE.

Showing the Notion of TRADITION, and that all the Properties of the Rule of Faith do clearly agree to It,

1. **H**AVING then quite lost our labour in our last search, let us see whether we shall have better success in this second Enquiry; which is, whether we may hope to find the Properties of the Rule of Faith meet in that which we call *orall or Practical Tradition*. By which we mean a Delivery down from hand to hand (by words, and a constant course of frequent and visible Actions conformable to those Words) of the Sence and Faith of Forefathers.

2. But, to make a more exprefs conceit of *Tradition*, that so we may more perfectly understand

derstand the Nature of that which we treat of, let us first soberly reflect on the manner how Children learn their own and other names with whom they live, as also of the rooms and things they converse with; afterwards, growing up, to exercise their trades, to write, read, or use civil or legal carriage to every one in their kinds; And, looking into the thing we shall observe that they first glean'd notions of those several Objects, either meerly through Impressions on their Senses by the Thing it self alone, or by the help of having them pointed at, or something practis'd about them at the same time they were nam'd; and afterwards learnt to repeat the same Words after others, more and more intelligently by degrees, and to practice the same Actions; till at length the former Generation of Teachers decaying by the course of Nature, a new one is sprung up to Perfection, furnish'd with all the accomplishments of the former, and continuing the same natural and Civil Knowledges, Actions and Conveniences to this Age which the former enjoy'd; and so forwards to succeeding Generations by a natural kind of method, without needing Books or new Skills meerly to perform this Effect of continuing and preserving the former Age, as it were alive in this. Add now to this that this Continuation goes not by long leaps from Age to Age, or from twenty years to twenty, but from year to year, nay moneth to moneth, & even less; according as the new Off-spring grows up by degrees

grees to a Capacity of understanding and practising; and then reflect on this whole Course, and we shall see the true nature of *Tradition* or immediate Delivery, as exercis'd in Civil matters and Human Conveniences.

3. We want nothing now but to apply this self-same Method to Spiritual or Ecclesiastical affairs, and to reflect how it brings down Faith by Doctrin couch't in Words and exprest in conformable Practices; and then we shall have gain'd a compleat and proper notion of *Faith-Tradition*, which is the Tradition we speak of.

4. We may observe then that the Children of Christians first hear the Sounds, afterwards by degrees get dim notions of God, Christ, Saviour, Heaven, Hell, Virtue, Vice, and such like; and, according as their capacity increases, are put on to practice what they have heard, and made to do some external Actions by precept and Example; which Actions by their more particularizing nature ripen to a more express and familiar conceit those raw Apprehensions or Judgments which while they stood under bare words look't as if they hover'd in the Ayr, and afar off. They are deterr'd from sins, first from lying and disobeying their Parents, afterwards others, by reproaches and Punishments, and encourag'd to virtuous actions by Rewards such as their Age bears; to breed in them a conceit of the badness of sin and goodness of Virtue: They are shown how to say
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Grace, say their Prayers, and made do it when they are able ; and to gain them some abstracted conceit of those Actions, they are inur'd even while very Infants by certain carriages unusual at other times, as holding up their hands or perhaps eyes, kneeling, keeping silence and other sober postures, to look upon such actions as extraordinary ones, when as yet they know no more of them ; which breeds a certain awe in them before-hand, preparing their minds to more reverence for the future. Afterwards, growing up, they come acquainted with the Creed, the ten Commandments, the Sacraments, some common forms of Prayer and other Practices of Christianity, and are directed to order their lives accordingly ; the Actions or Carriage of the circumstant Church and Elder Faithful guiding the Younger (notwithstanding the difficulty of the yet-undigested *Metaphor*, in which dialect Faith is deliver'd) to frame their lives to several sorts of Virtues by the doctrine deliver'd in words ; as Faith, Hope, Charity, Prayer, Adoration, &c. and the concomitant or subservient Virtues to these ; and the more intelligent, whose Understandings are clear'd by Study and the circumstance of conversing with the learned sort of Fore-fathers, to do out of Knowledge and Reflexion, what others do (as it were) naturally, and by meer Belief or guidance of others. And this goes on by insensible degrees, till at last the Teachers die, and leave in their
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room a new Swarm of the same nature with themselves as to Christian Life; that is, *practising* the same external Actions which determin to a certain degree the sence of the Words they have been inur'd to; and (since the practice of those Actions was instill'd from their Infancy, and serious) *holding* consequently the Principles of those Actions; that is, the same Points of Faith with the former Age. And this goes on not by leaps from an hundred years to an hundred, or from twenty to twenty, but by half-years to half-years, nay moneths to moneths, and even less; according as the young brood of Eaglets, made to see the Sun in his full Glory, grow up to a capacity of having their tender eyes acquainted first with the dawning, afterwards with the common day-light of Christian Doctrin.

5. If any should be so dull as to think this looks like a Speculation onely, and not to see plainly that 'tis confirm'd by ten thousand Experiments every day; I desire them to consider how the Primitive Faithful were inur'd to Christianity ere the Books of Scripture were writ or communicated; or how themselves (though Protestants or Presbyterians) were first imb'd with Christian Principles ere they could read, and they shall finde it was meerly by this way of Tradition: Nay more, I dare affirm that the very Presbyterians, much more the Protestants, still adhere to their Faith, because their Parents
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and Pastors taught them it when they were young, and not upon the Evidence of Scripture's Letter to their own private Judgement. Which is manifest by this, that those who are brought up under Mr *Baxter* are apt to follow him, others Mr. *Pierce*, and all in general hold fixedly to the doctrine of others, especially if their Parents be of the same persuasion. So hard it is to beat down Nature by Designe, or not to follow Tradition in practice, though at the same time they write and talk never so vehemently and loud against it. Nay 'tis easie to remark that those who were brought up Protestants, while they follow'd their Teachers and Forefathers in the Traditionary way, continu'd firmly such; and that none declin'd from that Profession until they began to use their own private Judgments in interpreting Scripture; and that then they ran by whole shoals into innumerable other Sects. However then they exclaim against Tradition, yet 'tis evident they owe to It all the Union and Strength they have, and to the renouncing ~~of~~ all their Distractions and Weakness.

6. What is said hitherto, is onely to explain the Nature of *Tradition* perfectly, and to settle a right conceit of it: which done, many Objections will be render'd unnecessary either to be answer'd or mention'd, as those that proceed against a kind of Prophetical *Afflatus*, which can have no force against our way, building upon perfect Evidence of our best Senses: but
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especially those which take so wrong an aim, that they dispute against *res traditæ*, or the things deliver'd, instead of Tradition it self, and thereupon accuse us for holding Human *Traditions*, or things invented by men, for Faith. Whereas, when we speak of the *Rule of Faith*, we mean by the word *Tradition* onely the *Method* of publickly delivering and conveying down Tenets, held to have come from Christ, in the manner before declared. This note premised to avoid mistake and keep the Reader's mind more steady to the matter in hand, let us see now whether *Tradition* have in it the nature of a *Rule of Faith*; which is done by examining whether the fore-named Properties belong to it or no.

7. And first, 'tis already manifest from what is said, that the First Property of the Rule of Faith, namely, that it must be *Evident to all as to its Existence*, absolutely agrees with Tradition. For, *Tradition* being the open conveyance down of *Practical Doctrines* by our best senses of Discipline, that is, our Eyes and Ears; and this by Sounds daily heard, and Actions daily seen and even felt; 'tis as easily applicable to all sorts, or Evident to them as to its Existence, as it is to see and hear: So that it can be insinuated into or affect not onely the rudest vulgar and little Children, but in some degree even very Babes, as was shown.

8. The second Condition, which is that its Ruling Power should be easily Evident to
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any Enquirer is thus shown to agree to Tradition, Let the rudest Doubter come and desire to be certify'd that Tradition is a Rule able if follow'd, to convey down Christ's doctrine to our very daies, or to the world's end ; and let these plain Interrogatories be put to him. Suppose all Protestants in *England* were settled in an unanimous Profession of their Faith, and that their Children without looking farther should believe and practice as their Fathers had brought them up, would it not follow in self-evident terms that those Children, while they followed this method, would be Protestants too ? Suppose these ; now grown men under those Parents, should have children too of their own who should behave themselves in the same manner towards their Fathers by believing and practising as they taught them, without looking any farther, would it not be equally evident they would still be Protestants also ? Since to believe and practice thus is to be a Protestant ; and, would not this Method if followed carry on that doctrine still forwards from Generation to Generation to the very end of the world ? 'Tis then most easily evidenceable to the rudest capacity that this immediate delivery of Tradition, as above explicated, is a certain way of deriving down Christ's Doctrine while the world shall last. This Property therefore of the Rule of Faith is found evidently to agree to Tradition.

9. The third Condition, which is that the
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Rule of Faith must be apt to justify unreflecting and undoubting persons that they proceed rationally while they rely on it, is found most exactly in Tradition. For, the common course of human conversation makes it a madness not to believe great multitudes of Knowers, if no possible consideration can awaken in our reason a doubt that they conspire to deceive us. Now in the way of Tradition all Deliverers or immediate Forefathers are Knowers, as appears in those who immediately heard the Apostles; all the Knowledge requisite being of what they were *taught*, and *practis'd* accordingly all their lives; of which 'tis impossible the rudest person should be ignorant, who ever had any Effect of such a Teaching wrought upon him. Nor can any, unless their brains rove wildly or be unsettled even to the degree of madness, suspect deceit where such multitudes unanimously agree in a matter of fact, look seriously when they speak, act themselves and practice accordingly, and show in the whole course of their carriage that they hope to be sav'd themselves, and to save others whom they thus instruct, by relying on this Truth that their Forefathers thus taught them; which amounts to this, that Nature or common Reason at unawares steals into them a solid apprehension that Tradition is of a *certain* kind of Nature; and so, that, while Fathers thus taught Children, it was ever such; that is, that Tradition is a certain Rule of conveying down Faith, which is all we

study to evince at present. I may add that Nature telling them by their own experience, that Parents generally would be apt to teach their Children what themselves had been taught and believ'd to be good, & true, and needfull to their eternal Salvation, their natural thoughts would lead them by a downright procedure, to judge that *Tradition* was ever in some considerable Body of Deliverers who stuck to it & own'd it; and that those had true Faith, or truly that doctrine which Christ and the first Planters of Christianity taught. But of this point more hereafter.

10. If it be objected that this multitude of plain honest-meaning Souls are as much Justify'd for believing Scripture. I answer, that if you mean their *Faith* conceiv'd to be found in Scripture, or a *determinate Sence* of Scripture's Letter, it cannot with any shew of reason be pretended that they are as much justifiable for believing any, setting aside Tradition's help; for, without this it totally depends on the inward Judgments, Fancies or Skills of men which they are unqualify'd to judge of; not on open verdict of Senses, to wield the Certainty or Uncertainty of which lies clearly within the reach of their common reason. And, as for Scripture's Letter, they cannot possibly be justify'd in reason for believing even the Substantial Truth of it without Tradition's assisting hand and preserving care. And the reason is the same; because the common course of human Experience tells them that

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Judgments or Opinions often disagree, but their plain Sensations (especially if frequently repeated) never; Whence a Jury of the plainest High-shoes would, upon the Evidence of the sight of six *Witnesses*, without more ado condemn a Malefactor; but not upon the *Judgments* of a thousand men, if a Testimony grounded on *Sense* were not brought. Now, take away Tradition, and all ground from *Certain Sence* fails us, either for the meaning or even Letter of Scripture; and all is left to men's Judgments built on latent Skills or Fancy, or at least on Sense liable to great and numerous mistakes, as hath been shown, (*Disc. 4. §. 3.*) Again, seeing every one apprehends the most vulgar have reason enough to believe there was such a one as *K. James* and *Q. Elizabeth*, of which they are no otherwise ascertain'd but by Tradition; why are not they as much or more justify'd for believing points of Faith received down by the same tenour? whereas if you go about to pump their common Reason about the Authority of the *Statute-Book* or the Truth of its *Letter*, you shall find them blunder and at a loss, being pos'd beyond their sphere of meer Nature by a question entrenching upon skill, to which they can never answer with a steady assuredness inwardly; and, if they do so outwardly, 'tis manifest that some Passion and not their Reason breeds that irrational Profession. The third Condition then of the Rule of Faith,

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which was, *to be apt to settle and justify unreflecting and undoubting vulgar*, is manifestly found agreeing to *Tradition*.

11. I put next the 6th Condition, because the proof of it evidently proves the fourth, fifth, and seventh ; For, what is built on immoovable Grounds or Certain in its self, has in it wherewith to settle and satisfy the most piercing Wits, convince the most obstinate Adversaries, and to Ascertain us absolutely. To prove that Tradition has Certain and Infallible Grounds it may suffice to note, that, (*Disc. I. p. 13, 14, 15.*) it being evidently proved Faith must be Infallible to us, and no less evident that it cannot be such without having Infallibly-certain Grounds, (since nothing can be firmer to us than the ground it stands on) now the Rule of Faith is its Ground ; It follows evidently that This must likewise be Infallibly-certain. There being then onely two Grounds or Rules of Faith owned ; namely, Delivery of it down by *Writing*, and by Words and Practice, which we call *Oral* and *Practical Tradition*, 'tis left unavoidably, out of the impossibility that Scripture should be Infallible as a Rule, that Tradition must be such.

12. Though this Conclusion ; supposing the Truth of the Propositions I assume as already prov'd, be sufficiently consequent to those Adversaries against whom I contest at present the Certainty of Tradition, in regard they do not stick to grant that either *Scripture* or *Tradition* must

must be the Rule of Faith; Yet I foresee more will be expected from a pretender to demonstrate its Certainty, and that he should frame his Discourse from intrinsecal *Mediums*. Reflecting then on the nature of Tradition as before explicated, we shall observe that it hath for its Basis the best Nature in the Universe, that is, Man's, the Flower and End of all the rest; and this, not according to his Moral part, defectible by reason of Original Corruption; nor yet his Intellectuals, darkly groping in the pursuit of Science by *reflected* thoughts or Speculation, amidst the misty vapours exhal'd by his Passion predominant over his rational Will; but according to those faculties in him perfectly and necessarily subject to the operations and strokes of Nature; that is, his Eyes, Ears, Handling, and the *direct* Impressions of Knowledge, as naturally and necessarily issuing from the affecting those Senses, as it is to feel heat, cold, Pain, Pleasure, or any other material Quality. Again, those Impressions upon the Sense are not made once but frequently; and, in most, many times every day. Moreover, to make these more express and apt to be taken notice of, their lives are to be fram'd by the Precepts they hear and conformable Examples they see; so that Faith (I mean the substance of it, or that solid plain Knowledge as far as 'tis apt to cause downright Christian Practice) comes clad in such plain matters of Fact that the most stupid

stupid man living cannot possibly be ignorant of it. Compare next the Certainty each Christian Forefather has of what he has practis'd all his life with that which a sworn Witness in a Court has of what he saw or heard but once; which done, multiply these thus-qualify'd Witnesses till you equal the vast total of Christianity, and then invent what force in Nature's Universe is comparable to this Inerrability of Tradition. And, if clear Reason evinces to you that 'tis far more possible to make a man not to be than not to know what is rivetted into his Soul by so oft-repeated Sensations; nay if it exceed all the power of Nature (abstracting from the cases of Madness and violent disease) to blot Knowledges thus fixt out of the Soul of one single Believer; then 'tis as clearly evinc'd that sooner may all Mankind perish than the regulative Virtue of Tradition miscarry: Nay, sooner may the sinews of entire Nature by overstraining crack, and she lose all her Activity and Motion, that is, her self, than one single part of that innumerable multitude which integrate that vast Testification we call *Tradition* can possibly be violated. The Virtue then, by which Tradition regulates her followers to bring down Faith unerringly, is grounded on a far stronger Basis than all Material Nature; that is, on such a one as was fitting for Supream Wisdom to lay for *Faith*, being so near and necessary a means to bring Mankind to his Beatitude, which was the end of all this

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corporeal Architecture. *Its followers*, I say ; for I onely contest in this present part of my Discourse that Tradition, if follow'd, is of such a Nature : Whether it was alwayes thus follow'd or no belongs to another Enquiry.

13. Nor must I neglect the reminding in this place what was produc't before (*p. 8.*) to show the Evidenceableness of Tradition's Ruling Power to the rudest Enquirers ; It being as Evident that while the next Age believes and practises as the former Age held and practic't (that is , while the Rule of Tradition is follow'd) those of the later Age are still of the same Faith with the former, as it is that *to believe the same is to believe the same*. Onely I am forbidden by my Reason and Logick to call this a Proof or Argument, because 'tis of the Nature of that first Principle *Idem est idem sibiipss* ; and onely an Instance or Particular of it, as these Propositions are, *a stone is a stone, a man is a man* ; in which the two Terms are as neerly laid and as fast connected as perfect Identity can cement them ; that is, so close that no *medium* can come between to make them capable of being *argu'd* or *prov'd* ; that is, 'tis *self-evident* : And so I had no more to do but by opening the Terms to explicate the Proposition; which done it was Evident beyond all possible need of proof.

14. Let now the most rational Doubter or most Sceptical Dissenter muster all the Caprichoes of Fancy Invention can suggest, and the

subtlest quirks ingeniously-misus'd Logick and abus'd-into-Sophistry can furnish them with; Let the most obstinate and acute Adversaries of Faith whet their wits to that degree of sharpness as to be able to penetrate with nice distinctions between the sides of two notions, if in the least disagreeing, (that is, onely-metaphysically-divisible,) and lay open their difference; what can they say in this case? If they will argue against Tradition, it must be out of some *Knowledges*; but Knowledge is taken from *Things*, and the best Thing in this universe, to wit Man's Nature in what he is unalterable, is engag'd for the Certainty of Tradition. But indeed, their proper task will be to find a solution for, or to *loose* those two notions which perfect Identity binds, and to blunder that Truth which the noon-day-Sun of *Self-evidence* discovers, and (as it were) writes with its most lightsome and most conspicuous rays.

15. These four last Conditions then of the Rule of Faith most fully agree with Tradition as well as the three first, that is, 'tis Self-evident to all as to its Existence, p. 7. and Evidenceable as to its Ruling Power to any vulgar Enquirer, p. 8. Apt to settle and justify undoubting persons, p. 9, 10. to satisfy fully the most Sceptical dissenters and most rational doubters, and to convince the most obstinate and acute Adversaries; built upon unmoveable Grounds; that is, Certain in its self and absolutely

lutely ascertainable to us, §. 11, 12, 13, 14. And these Properties springing out of the very nature of the Rule of Faith, and being incompetent to any Competitor or pretended Rule, as has been shown, this main Conclusion is made good, that

TRADITION IS THE RULE OF FAITH.

SIXTH DISCOURSE,

Endeavouring to demonstrate à priori the Indefeasibleness of Tradition.

1. **A**LL this is well, may some say, in case Tradition had been ever held to; for then indeed Faith had come down by such an incomparable Testification that the like was never heard of. But how know we who began to desert that Rule, and who ever held to it; or that it was ever held to by any?

2. Now, though the carriage of Protestants makes this labour needless, while I write against them; yet I owe to my former discourse a clearing of this likewise. Their *Carriage*, I say; For, when it is prov'd evidently that Tradition is a Certain Rule and Scripture's Letter not such, they who reject the former to adhere to the later are clearly cast in their Cause and condemn'd without

out more ado. Indeed, If Protestants faulted not the Rule but onely pretended that Men had fail'd *it*, they might yet delude the world with some colour that they had ever held to the doctrine of Ancestours, and onely deserted us because we had deserted Ancestours formerly; but, if they put the fault in the Rule it self, write against it, disgrace it and recurr to another, 'tis a certain signe of self-condemnation; and that they judge in their inmost thoughts that Tradition or Immediate Delivery ever stood our Friend and would overthrow them. Nay, did they think they could manifest satisfactorily that we had deserted formerly the Faith of our Forefathers as they pretend, they had no more efficacious way to ruine us than to oppose us upon those Principles laid in this former Discourse; since Tradition, a little after the Primitive times, at which time they pretend we fell, had not gone down many steps, and so the Renouncers of it would in reason seem to them more easily discoverable by its vicinity to the Apostles. Besides, this Rule being so own'd and stuck to by us it had been the most efficacious way *ad hominem* to confute and shame us even by our own Principles. Wherefore, it is most evident they think it not their best play to offer to avail themselves by Tradition, knowing 'twill be their disadvantage and our gain; that is, they in effect tacitly yield, that (if Tradition be a Certain Rule, which we have shown self-evident) the doctrine held

held by our Church to be of Faith came down uninterruptedly from the Apostles, that is, was ever, or is Christ's doctrine; however, they blind their own Consciences with glances of Fancy from private Interpretations of God's Word, and deaf their own and others ears with empty sounds rebounding with false Ecchoes from those Sacred Oracles.

3. Now, though it seem an unreasonable expectation to require that a Rule should not only be able to rule those who *would* follow it, but also should have power to *oblige* the generality of those who actually *do* follow it not to desert it; yet, such is the Goodness of our Saviour towards his Church to order that the Rule which brings down Faith to us should, both out of the Nature of *Man* in which it is grafted, and much more by means of the *Doctrine* it recommends, be of so wonderful an Efficacy.

4. This point therefore, of the actual Indefectiveness of Tradition, I shall endeavour to demonstrate both *à priori* from proper Causes, and *à posteriori* from a now-adayes experienc't Effect.

5. To do the former, I lay for my Grounds, First, that Christian doctrine was at first unanimously settled by the Apostles in the hearts of the Faithful dispers'd in great multitudes over several parts of the world. Secondly, that this doctrine was firmly believed by all those Faithful to be the way to Heaven, and the Contra-

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dicting or Deserting it the way to Damnation ; so that the greatest *Hopes* and *Fears* imaginable were, (by engaging the Divine Authority,) strongly apply'd to the Minds of the First Believers , encouraging them to the adhering to that doctrine, and deterring them from relinquishing it ; and indeed infinitely greater than any other whatever springing from any Temporal consideration ; moreover, that this was in all Ages the persuasion of the Faithful. Thirdly, that *Hopes* of Goods and *Fears* of Harms , strongly apply'd , are the Causes of Actual Will. Lastly, that the thing was Feisible or within their power, that is, that what they were bred to was Knowable by them. This put, it follows as certainly that a great number or Body of the first Believers, and after-Faithful in each Age , (that is from Age to Age,) would continue to hold themselves and teach their Children as themselves had been taught , (that is, should follow and stick to Tradition,) as it does that a Cause put actually causing produces its Effect. *Actually*, I say ; For, since the Cause is put , the Application put , and the Patient dispos'd (for our Argument puts this to be the Minds of true Believers , in regard the first Renouncers of Tradition must have been *True Believers* or Holders of it ere they renounc'd it) it follows inevitably that the Cause is put still *actually causing*.

6. I foresee some will object the Indisposition of the Wills of the Believing Parents by reason

son of original Corruption. But, supposing I dispute against those Christians who hold that Christ's Doctrin was intended to be an Antidote for that Original malice, and to keep Men's Wills (already possess'd with it) *right*, notwithstanding the poize of their corrupted Nature and the temptations of their circumstances; to say 'tis apply'd universally to all severall sorts and tempers, and preserves none good, is to question Christ's Wisdom, and to doubt whether it be fit to do the Effect it was meant for. Not to mind the Objecter how many thousands of Martyrs and Holy Confessors, by the Power of this Doctrin, overcame this inbred declivity of their Wills and its disorderly inclinations to the dearest Goods Life or Nature could bestow. A great part therefore would be virtuous, and so (it being easie and obvious, as our former Discourse prov'd) would teach their Children what themselves believ'd in their Consciences to be Christ's Doctrin, or the doctrin they had been taught; whence a Body of Traditionary Christians would still be continu'd to the very End of the World; nor could that Rule be totally relinquish'd by any Stratagem of the Devil or prevail'd against *by the gates of Hell*. Again, though Nature incline men to sin or vicious Appetites, yet can it incline them all to this sort of sin, that is, to teach their Children what they think will damn them? Or rather does not Nature most strongly carry them to the contrary?

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• Their Original corruption then is no particular inviter to this kind of sin, to teach their Children pernicious falshoods, and which themselves hold such; though themselves be otherwise liable to several sort of particular failings.

7. If any object the fickle nature of the Will, and imagin that this exempts her from the Laws of Causes; I ask them (without engaging farther into School-disputes, which I industriously avoid) whether *Good* be not the proper Object of the *Will*, and so is to affect it when sufficiently apply'd or propos'd? If so, then, since an Object to affect a power is to put it *in act*, and the Act of the Power we call the Will is actual Volition or Willing, Good propos'd makes the Will to will or desire that Good, and consequently the known means to obtain it; Now, Infinit Goods and Harms sufficiently propos'd are of their own nature incomparably more powerful Causes to carry the Will, than Temporal ones. Since then, when two Causes are counterpos'd, the lesser, when it comes to execution, is no Cause, as to the substance of that Effect (as a heavy weight, which were otherwise a cause of descending, is no such Cause when overweigh'd by an heavier, as not making its scale descend at all) it follows that there is no Cause to move the Wills of a World of Believers to be willing to do that which they judge would lose themselves and their Posterity Infinit Goods and bring them Infinit Harms, such strong and main
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Hopes and Fears being put in the counter-balance, in case a sufficient *Proposal* or *Application* be not wanting.

8. The last Attempt then of an Objectour is to fault the *Application* of Spiritual and Heavenly Goods, and to enhance the Proposals of Sensible and Temporal Objects. But, if we reflect with how steady a pursuit and even equal to that of eye-sight or any other Sense, we generally work for Ends no otherwise propos'd than by Undoubted Authority; as when a King prepares for an Expedition against a forrain Country he never saw, or a Gentleman for a journey to *Rome* and such like; If we but call to mind how the greatest Testimony in the world engages God's supremely-Infallible Veracity for the truth of the Doctrin it proposes, which ascertains us of those Infinit Goods and Harms spoken of; the best Application of a motive to a truly rational power which can possibly be imagin'd; If we but consider how those spiritual and unseen Goods are made Intelligible to all, in a fair measure, by most fit and obvious Metaphors; Familiar and Sensible, by daily practice and as it were Experience of them in Christian Language and Actions, by the venerable Sacraments, by the spectable Majesty of outward Ceremonies, all including our spiritual last End, or intimating it by their order to it; nay, if we but contemplate even Essential Heaven it self made the Object of our Senses, to comply with

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our weakness, by the *Word's being made Flesh and dwelling amongst us*, his being born, his suffering cold, hunger, persecution, banishment and other inconveniencies in his Life; his curing our diseased, comforting our afflicted, raising our dead, and other miraculous actions; his being bound, buffeted, scourged, crown'd with thorns, and lastly crucify'd; and all this believed to be for our sakes; all of them Objects most sensibly and palpably affecting our Understandings and thence sliding movingly (and this by their Sensible nature) into our very Wills; we shall discover that the Infinite Spiritual Good we spoke of is become, through the Provident Goodness of our God, both as easily appliable as the most visible and concerning Civil Actions working on the best Sensations of our Forefathers, the best and amplest Authority in the world to make *their* Sensations *ours*, and the whole course of our Life, Actions, Sacraments, and all other outward shows, which could be invented to make such mysteries maniable, can possibly render them; and that, if after all this they can be conceiv'd to want any thing of the Sensibleness, 'tis abundantly supply'd by that deep Impression which the Sacred Horrour of the Reverences given to them makes, and the efficacious wayes to excite and preserve that Reverence. All which wayes and objects, thus easily and strongly appliable, were frequently and efficaciously apply'd by the education of Parents
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and by the Discipline and Oeconomy of the Church; which brings those speculations to practice, was ever, and must needs reach the Generality. In a word, Christianity, urg'd to execution, gives its Followers a *new Life* and a *new Nature*; than which a nearer Application cannot be imagin'd. No *Application* therefore is wanting; Wherefore, the *Efficient* and the *Matter* being proper and fitted to one another; the *Effect* must still *be* or continue; that is, the delivering down sincerely and carefully Christian Doctrin first receiv'd must still continue in some great multitude at least, and this to the end of the world.

SEVENTH DISCOURSE.

An Objection clear'd, and the Beginning and Progress of an HEREST connaturally laid open.

1. **W**Hat onely and mainly seems to prejudice our Argument is, that there have actually been many Hereticks or Deserters of Tradition. To which I answer, that 'tis not to be expected but some Contingency should have place where an whole *Species* in a manner is to be wrought upon. It sufficeth us that the Causes to preserve Faith indeficiently entire are as effi-
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cacious as those which are lay'd for the propagation of Mankind; The Virtue of *Faith* not being to continue longer than *Mankind*, its only Subject, does: Now, they will easily appear as efficacious as the other if we consider the strength of those Causes before explicated, and reflect that they are effectively powerful to make multitudes daily debar themselves of those pleasures which are the Causes of Mankind's Propagation. And, if we look into History for Experience of what hath past in the world since the first planting of Christianity, we shall find far more particulars failing in propagating their Kind than their Faith.

2. I know the multitudes of Hereticks which have from time to time risen makes this position seem incredible; wherefore, that we may at once both open Tradition and make good our Tenet, we will reflect how an *Heresy* is first bred. To inforce then our former Argument, we must look on Christ's Church not onely as on a Congregation having in their hearts those most powerful motives already spoken of, able of their own nature to carry each single heart possess'd by them, though left at its own liberty; but as on the perfectest form of a Commonwealth, having within her self Government and Officers appointed by Christ himself, and so look't upon by the Faithful, to take care all those motives be actually apply'd as much as may be to the subject Layity; and that all the Sons of the Church
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be aw'd by wholsom disciplin to conform their lives according to the Doctrin they profess. Yet notwithstanding, as in the *Civil State*, maugre the Laws and care of Governours, it happens sometimes that some particular Person turns *Rebel* or Outlaw, and associates to himself others; so it happens sometimes in the Church, that, because 'tis impossible the perfection of Disciplin should extend it self in so vast a multitude to every particular, some one or few persons, by neglect of applying Christian motives to their Souls, fall into extravagancies of spiritual Pride, Ambition, Lust, or other vices; and itching with desire of Followers to honour and support them, they first lay hold on some accidental miscarriages, as foolish opinions or ill lives of some in the Church, which they aggravate beyond all reason to justify their Rebellion, and then invent and propose new Tenets to others; which partly by their plausibleness, partly licentiousness, suting with the curious or passionate humour of diverse, if Governours be not vigilant and prudent, draw them into the same faction with themselves; especially, if they get the State on their sides, secure indemnity and hopes of reward draw the corrupt hearts of many to bandy with their fellow-revolters against the former Church. Thus a *Body* is made; inconsiderable in respect of the whole, which yet is engag'd by the natural care of self-preservation to make Head against it. The Church stands

upon the Uninterrupted Succession of her Doctrin from Christ, grounded on the noon-day manifestation of the most universal and clear Attestation in the world: The other's known Newness makes it impossible to human nature (though most deprav'd) to pretend this reception from immediate Forefathers; the contrary being so evident to the whole world's eye-sight that this were to tell an open ly to no imaginable purpose. They must cry therefore the Church has err'd in Faith, else they condemn themselves; whence they are oblig'd at next to renounce and disgrace Tradition, or the living voice of the Church, as unfit to be a Rule, which left in force would presently quash and strangle all their Attempts. After this a new Rule must be sought for; either some private Inspiration, or some waxen-natur'd words not yet sent nor having any certain Interpreter, but fit to be plaid upon diversly by quirks of wit; that is, apt to blunder and confound, but to clear little or nothing. Their Policy must be to study vapour in *wordish learning*, to be dextrous in *Criticisms* and all that can conduce to the various acception of words; and then to hook Catholicks from their Infallible and Evident way of *Tradition*, to combat with them at their own weapon and in their own way: In which if the Catholick be so unwary or good-natur'd as to engage, and having been inur'd to more solid and sober Grounds for his Faith, be not perhaps

haps so skilful in beating the air as his bird-witted Opponent, presently a Victory is proclaimed with the loudest Trumpet of Fame, and (Vanity being generally their God who place their honour in such airy sorts of learning) blaz'd up and down to the commendation of themselves and perversion of others. But a company which makes such a bustle cannot long want a Name; Wherefore, the Traditionary Christian having ever enjoy'd the Appellation of *Catholick*, and it being impossible their Adversaries should by any design or craft alter the common Language of Mankind, hopeles to attain the name of *Catholick*, they are forced to content themselves (though unwilling) with some other new one; which, Nature, working upon their own comportment, determines to be either from their Authour, as *Lutherans*, *Zuinglians*; or their new Tenet, as *Tritheists*, *Sacramentarians*; or some combination amongst themselves, as *Protestants*; or, lastly, some particular carriage, as *Quakers*, *Dippers*, &c.

3. These first Adherents to the upstart Novelist being clung into a Body, after a while young Understandings ripening to a capacity of Faith, things are presently alterd; The pretended Rule of Scripture's Letter's self-sufficiency is immediately thrown by as useless any farther; Design hath got its end already, and the natural way of Tradition begins to take place again and re-

cover its self: nay the Reformers themselves are forc't to crave help of it to keep their company together. Children are taught that they are to believe their Pastours and Fathers; and, though they are permitted to read the Scripture when they come at age, yet they are told they are to guide themselves by the *sence* their Pastours and Fathers give it; which is, that they ought to guide themselves by the Faith of their Parents and Teachers in interpreting Scripture; the very way Catholicks ever took in that particular: And, if any company of men though now mature to judge, presume to follow their own Judgment in interpreting it, and differ from those first Reformers, these, if they get the power in their hands, will presently fall to oblige them by force to *act*, that is (if they would have them do it conscientiously, which else were to force them to sin) to *hold* as they do, and persecute or punish them if they do not; whereas they guide themselves to their best capacity by the Scripture's Letter which is the very Rule of Faith their Persecutors taught them and made use of themselves when they broke from the Church. Which evidently shows that a new Rule is introduc't; and that it is not indeed the Letter of God's word which is now thought fit to guide the Readers of it to Faith, but those men's Interpretations of it. So that the breaking from Tradition and consequently the Church casts them most inevitably upon these self-contradictions.

ctions. First, to reform upon pretence of the Scripture's Letter being the Rule of Faith, yet afterwards in practice to desert that Rule in their carriage towards others. Secondly, to disallow to others those Grounds themselves still profess to proceed upon. Thirdly, to pretend first the Scripture's Letter *clear of it self* without needing the Church to interpret it, so to avoid condemnation from the former Church; yet afterwards, to judge the Followers of it to their best power to go wrong; that is, to confess it *obscure*, and to need their new Churches Interpretation. 4^{ly}. To *persecute* others for taking that way, which they *held* (at least pretended) *meritorious* in themselves. 5^{ly}. To oblige others to relinquish the sole guidance of the Scripture's Letter and to rule themselves by *their* Tradition; and yet, at the same time, when they write and dispute against Catholics, to impugn Tradition or the doctrine of Forefathers as Unfitting to fence it, and abet onely the Self-sufficiency of Scripture's Letter. And, lastly, to impute that carriage to our Church as a fault which themselves practice upon their own Subjects: And, which is most material, our Church punishes none but such as *desert* the Rule she recommends; whereas they punish those under them for *following too close* that Rule which themselves recommended and applauded, as the whole and sole Basis of their Reformation.

4. Now, what can follow hence, but that their *Ecclesiastical* Subjects whom Common Sense

cannot but make exceeding sensible of such their unreasonable carriage, in persecuting them purely for following God's word or the Scripture's Letter to their best power, which themselves had taught them *might* securely, nay *ought* in conscience be follow'd, let the Consent of Forefathers and the present Church made up of meer men say what they would, what follows, I say, but that exasperated beyond patience by this procedure which they will be apt to conceive to be a most senseless and self-condemning tyranny over their Consciences, they will (unless Governours be vigilant,) strive to wreak their malice against their Persecutors ; and if they be numerous and powerful, endeavour to involve whole Nations in war and blood ; which God of his mercy avert from our distracted Country. Of so main consequence it is both for Church and State that men's Minds be right set in the Fundamental Grounds of Christianity ; and that the Principle they build Religion on be *Evident*, that is, apt to unite their Understandings and by them their Affections ; not Uncertain and Vertible, which must needs lead (if pursu'd by an earnest zeal) to nothing but diversities in Opinions about Faith, thence to dissensions and Feuds in the Will, which upon any great pressure will be apt to break forth into actions of highest enmity ; and by the irreconcilableness of such Interests, (neither side being able to yeeld to the other in what each of them holds Sacred, Religious and

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Conscientious) endless and fiercest bickerings are apt to succeed, even to utter desolation; as frequent Histories too lamentably record. Not that I intend the Justification of those revolting Sects, who having no certain Grounds of Controversy are both self-condemn'd by the common Light of Reason for disobeying a Certain and Known Legal Authority (which God's Law and plain Reason commands them to submit to) to maintain an Uncertainty, that is for any thing they know an Error; and, were it a known Truth they held, would be no less condemn'd by the Law of God and common Reason, nay out the nature of Religion it self, for making Rebellion and an unimpower'd Sword the Defence of Truth, which stands firm on a surer Basis. I only mind prudent Considerers on the by how much it conduces to State-Unity and Peace that the Principle of conveying Faith to us be built on *Sensible Evidence* acknowledgable by all Mankind, when rightly understood; and not left to giddy Interpretations of Private Fancies, which are apt to run so eccentrically to one another, that we can never expect they shall have any common point, where to fix and unite men's Minds and Affections.

5. The usefulness of this Parergon serves to elucidate as it were practically and experimentally the Certainty of Tradition. The particular use we make of it in this present Discourse, whence we digress into it, is to conclude (as well

as we can of things at a common view, which yet is no less certain) that the number of the actual Deserters of the natural way of Tradition have been but few, to wit the first Revolters, a small handful compar'd to all Christianity besides, and onely occasionally not constantly happening; that the Descendents of these Revolters were taught by them to believe Them in the right, in interpreting Scripture, and not their own Judgments; that is, follow'd the way of *Tradition*, however *misplac't*: To which if we compare the numerous Contingencies both in man's Nature and other circumstances, hindring Propagation, every day happening, we shall find much reason to prefer the multitudes of the other before this: But if we add to this Consideration the daily decay of innumerable particulars, upon whom the Continuation of Mankind depends, by natural or accidental deaths, and reflect on the innumerable new Subjects and even whole Nations into which Tradition hath and does daily propagate it self, and those uninfected by new Heresies for whole Ages, that is without any one Deserter of Tradition among them; and none of these beholding to Progenitors for their Faith but to Externs who converted them, whereas *Propagating their Kind* can onely be by those of the same race; We shall find that the Causes laid to propagate & preserve a Body of *Traditionary Christians* look far more steadily and less needing a recourse to any particular

cular Providence than those which we can discover laid for the keeping on Foot a Body of *Men*. Whence, if any (as the common fashion is) bring against the perpetuation of *Tradition* such wild, roving Arguments as would equally strike at the Certainty of perpetuating *Mankind*, or continuing any *Species* in Nature, the readiest answer is to show *they do so*; and then to tell them we intend not Tradition should last longer than the onely *Species* capable of Faith will; that is, longer than *Mankind* is to stand, who onely can have it or need it.

EIGHTH DISCOURSE.

Endeavouring to demonstrate à Posteriori the Uninterruptedness of Tradition hitherto.

I. **H**AVING seen and weigh'd the strength of those Causes which preserve and continue Tradition on Foot, and thence endeavour'd to demonstrate its Indefectibleness as the proper and necessary Effects of those Causes; we will now begin our Discourse at the other end, and try if we can conclude the same from some Proper Effect; that is, from such an Effect as could onely have sprung from the *actual Indeficiency of Tradition* as its Cause: That so we may show
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the Certainty of Faith's Conveyance to us doubly guarded, and on all sides Evident.

2. Though indeed this seems a needless endeavour against the Protestant who yeilds that those points of Faith in which we agree came down by this way of Tradition. Whence, he is to be prest to answer candidly these Queres. Were not the Trinity, Incarnation, and other points in which we agree, held in all Ages since Christ by God's Church? He must yeild it, no Protestant ever denying it; Besides that we both agree to call that *God's Church* which held those main points of Faith. Next, he is to be askt, whether, seeing those points were held ever of Faith, Fathers did not actually teach Children so, or the former Age the later. Common reason will teach him they did; which devolves into this that a Protestant must confess those points came down by Tradition, and that Tradition hath not fail'd to bring them down to us. Ask him next by what *virtue* Tradition perform'd this, and whether the same virtue were not powerful to bring down *others* as well as *these* had any such been? And, when he assigns this *virtue*, I cannot suspect him negative in so plain a point. Ask him farther; Is there not a necessary Connexion and Relation between such a constant Cause and its formal Effect? So that, if its formal Effect be *Those Points received as delivered ever*, the Proper Cause must be an *ever-delivery*, whence, we can argue from such an Effect to its Cause

Cause for *any* particular Point , and consequently for any Point that is in Controversie between Them and Us, in case it be a Point we held *ever deliver'd* : And if so, as manifest Reason evinces it, our now-held Faith was taught by Christ and his Apostles , and our dispute is at an end. But, because I rather suspect the Protestant seeing his Cause and Interest to deep engag'd and himself streightned by such strict Connexion of Terms , will fly of and deny Tradition to be a *necessary Cause* , notwithstanding its constant tenour of having wrought this its Effect millions of times, or from step to step during so many Ages, and will not care to alledge that all this is pure *Chance and Contingency* , I shall pursue the Designe and Method I at first intended,

3. The Effect then we will pitch upon and avow to be the proper one of such a Cause, is *The present persuasion of Traditionary-Christians (or Catholicks,) that their Faith hath descended from Christ and his Apostles uninterruptedly* , which we find most firmly rooted in their hearts. And the Existence of this Persuasion we affirm to be Impossible without the Existence of *Traditions ever-Indeficiency* to beget it.

4. To prove this , I lay this first Principle. *That Age which holds her Faith deliver'd thus from the Apostles neither can it self have chang'd any thing in it , nor know or doubt that any Age since the Apostles had chang'd or innovated any thing therein.* This Proposition needs no proof to evidence

evidence it, but onely an Explication; For, since no man can *hold* contrary to his Knowledge, or *doubt* of what he *holds*, nor change or innovate in the case propos'd without *knowing* he did so; 'tis a manifest Impossibility an whole Age should fall into an Absurdity so inconsistent with the Nature of one single man.

5. The second Principle shall be this, *No Age could innovate any thing, and withall deliver that very thing to Posterity as receiv'd from Christ by continual succession.* For, Since Man is a Rational Creature, he must have some reason or motive, good or bad, which he proposes to himself as an End to be atchiev'd by his action; and (whatever his remote end is) his immediate End in telling Posterity a late invented thing was held immediately before, is to make them believe it; Wherefore, since a seen Impossibility cannot be a motive to one not frantick, and that 'tis evidently Impossible they should make Posterity believe a thing so universally known to be false as this must needs be; because were it possible the whole Age should conspire to tell such a lye, (the *whole*, I say, otherwise the Refusers would easily discover the cheat) yet 'tis manifestly Impossible all at age to know the truth should conspire from so many several and so far distant places, in the precise time to deceive the new Off-spring every moneth ripening to a capacity of such knowledges, or blot out all the Monuments which would evidently undeceive
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their abused Posterity: 'Tis then as impossible this Principle should falter as that the foregoing Age should conspire to act without a motive or that the succeeding Age should *believe* what they *know* to be *otherwise*; that is, should hold both sides of a Contradiction in a clear matter of Fact, which is utterly inconsistent with a judging or cognoscitive nature.

6. These Principles lay'd, we will advance to the proof of our main Conclusion on this manner; that since neither any Age (by our first Principle) could *hold* a new-introduc't point for *not-new but immediately deliver'd*; nor yet any foregoing Age (by our second) make it be *receiv'd* as *not-new* by Posterity, it follows that in *no* Age could *any* doctrin *changing* the immediate Faith of Fore-fathers or *new at that time*, come in or be *received* under the notion of *immediately deliver'd* or *not-new at that time*. Wherefore, since nothing can descend or *come down* under the notion of *not-new*, or *deliver'd uninterruptedly*, unless it first *come in* or be *receiv'd* under the notion of *not-new* or *deliver'd uninterruptedly*, nor be held by us as descended under such a notion unless it did actually descend to us under such a notion (by the second) it follows manifestly that, if we *now hold* it *descended as such*, it *did* descend *as such*, and consequently was *received* by the Deliverers *as such*; and (the same reason holding equally in each Age from Christ,) came down consequently from Christ
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and his Apostles. No power then or wit of man could make our Faith *now held to be so descended*, but *its having been actually so descended*: that is, onely the Existence of Tradition's Indeficiency could have effected this present persuasion of Traditionary Christians (or Catholicks) that their Faith descended uninterruptedly from the Apostles. It being then manifest by Experience that this Effect or present Persuasion *is*, (for all Catholicks hold the Church never Fail'd in Faith,) 'tis demonstratively Evident that its proper and onely Cause has been put; that is, that Christian Tradition has ever been held to by a Body of Men consisting of the Predecessors to those whom we find actually thus persuaded.

NINTH DISCOURSE,

Opening the incomparable Strength of the Churches Human Authority, and the Infinit advantages accrue to It by the Supernatural Assistances of the Holy Ghost.

I: BUT all this is Nature may some say, and by this Method an Heathen may by his natural wit become a good Christian. By which word *Nature*, if the Objecter means Reason wrought upon by motives laid by God's special goodness to bring Souls to bliss, I wonder what else is *Supernaturality* but this which he miscalls *Nature*; and why Reason, rectify'd by such Lights and Proposals as the force of Nature could not have aym'd at much less effected, ought not to be said to be affected *supernaturally*, however those very motives connatural to our Souls: It being evident that we use even the natural power of our Reason in discoursing of things above our reason; and, on the other side to expect no constant way or common path of motives laid for the Salvation of Mankind, but extraordinary inspirations for each particular man, unravell's the Order of God's best Providence, and is the very notion of Fanatickness. But to meddle with this point is out of my road otherwise than to take my rise hence to show how far Christian Tradition is strengthen'd above the

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greatest meerly-human Testimony whatever: And that the Church owes this strength to those Motives supervening to meer Nature, which we rightly call *Assistances of the Holy Ghost*; in regard they are built on Perfections of Will in the Faithful, or on Virtues, the Effects properly attributed to that Divine Person.

2. Ere we come to explain what advantage the Church, as thus *divinely assisted*, has over her self as meerly wrought upon by *Human* motives, we will compare first her Human Authority with some other vast Body of Testifiers which may most seem to stand in competition with her. And an eminent and acute opposer of Tradition has already pointed us out a choice one; namely, that of the *Mahometans* for *Mahomet's* Existence: which we doubt not to have the power to convey down the Truth thereof with Infallible Certainty to the end of the world, if follow'd; nor do we think the most Sceptical Protestant doubts but it has had the force to make it self be follow'd hitherto; however at unawares their calm Reason grants that to a Body of Turks which their Passion makes them question and even deny to a Church of Christians. Yet, I averr that the Human force of Tradition in the Church for the descent of the main Body of Christs doctrine far exceeds that of the Turks for *Mahomet's* Existence.

3. To shew this in brief I note in the first place and chiefly; that howsoever a report may spread

spread universally from a small beginning in the quality of a Rumour, yet the force of its Credibility, if it be a matter of Fact, is founded on the Quantity and Quality of those who first *saw* or *perceiv'd* it. Putting then the *Quality* of the Testifiers in both cases to be Equal, so to bring our Controversy to a smaller compass, and comparing onely the Quantity or Number of the original Testifiers on both sides; what proportion is there between that handful of men about *Mecha* and some few other places where *Mahomet* conquer'd and planted his doctrine, and those vast multitudes whom all the Apostles, Disciples, and Apostolical men converted by most powerful miracles in so many distant Nations in the World? If we lay them together we shall find that few *saw* or *felt* (that is, were *witnesses* of) *Mahomet's* Existence so much as *once*, in comparison of those who were *every day* imbu'd with and practic't Christian Doctrine. A new Consideration springs hence that 'tis a thousand times easier for that single company of *Arabians* and *Syrians* to *conspire to a ly* and so deliver down to us a false *Mahomet*, than it is for such a multitude of people in so remote Countries as first suck't in Christianity to conspire in the very thought of having such a Conspiracy. And, lastly, it was as easie by oft repeated Sensations to *know* Christian Doctrine at first to that degree as to govern their actions by it (which is all that is requisit for the Generality) it giving the Prin-

ciples to the daily practice of their new Life as they were Christians, as it was for those other witnesses to be certain of *Mahomet's* Existence; and much easier, in regard the greater part by far of those whom we allow Witnesses of *Mahomet's* Existence perhaps scarce knew him by sight; not conversing him daily or very often, as each of the Primitive Christians did with those points of Faith they guided their lives by.

4. The Human Authority then of the Church being such as exceeds the Evidence of other Testimonies, which yet are such that amongst all the most extravagant *Opinions* none was ever found so frantick as to doubt them; and, should any do so, all sober Mankind would esteem them stark mad; which could not be done in reason unless they renounc't perfect Evidence, that is, unless those Testimonies were perfectly-Evident: This, I say, being so, some may think it superfluous and a quirk of an overstraining Fancy to contend there is any greater Evidence to ascertain the conveyance of our Faith from Christ's time to us. But, whosoever reflects on the reason of those words, *Sic Deus dilexit Mundum ut Filium suum Unigenitum daret*, John 3. 16. Or of those, *Nunquid de bobus cura est Deo?* 1 Cor. 9. 9. *Nonne vos magis pluris estis volatilibus cæli?* Mat. 6. 26. and such like; or, on what Metaphysicks demonstrate concerning the perfect method and wayes of
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Essential Wisdome, will easily be convinc'd that, if the Salvation of Mankind be the *End* of this Material world's Creation, the Providences to bring about this End ought in true wisdome be so particular and so sublimely efficacious that the means laid for the preservation of any other *species* in Nature would scarce deserve the name of a Providence in comparison of the other. Whence follows, that the means which are mainly influential to promote Man towards Bliss (such as is *Faith*, the Rule of that Life by which he tends to Heaven, and the *Substance* of *his Hope* which gives the vigour to that Life) must be Certain (its Efficacy depending on this Certainty) beyond any Evidence meer Nature could compass. Which that great Mediator on God's Law day and night well comprehended, when out of the full sight of this Truth he burst out into that expression of wonderment, *Testimonia tua, Domine, credibilia facta sunt nimis.*

5. We will briefly touch at some of the Advantages which those Assistances superadded to Nature give the Church, and leave them to be scann'd by the leasurely thoughts of attentive Considerers.

6. First then, we find that 'tis natural to every Man that his Phantasms should be such as the Impressions of the Objects are apt to make them, his Thoughts appropriated to his Phantasms, and his outward Expressions concerning the thing,

and amongst them his Words, conformable to his Thoughts: So that true Words and sincere Actions are the proper Effects of the other Causes, and necessarily produc't by them if Designe hinder not: Which amounts to this, that 'tis Natural for every man to speak Truth; and that, whenever one speaks False wittingly, Artifice makes him cast about to contrive a ly fittingly to the end he aims at; whence it is that Fools and Drunken men, who are incapable of such Artifice, use to tell the plain Truth. If this be so in Nature, and that Grace is to perfect Nature in whatever is *good* in it, it follows that one truly *Christian* heart is far more fixt to Veracity than others not imbu'd with those heavenly Tenets; and, consequently, that a Multitude of *such* incomparably exceed, in point of *testifying*, the same number of others unfortify'd by Christ's Doctrin.

7. This will be clearer if we reflect upon the way by which Original Corruption violates frequently in execution this natural Veracity; and 'tis this; that inclining and transporting them to the undue love of Creatures even to the injuring known rational Orders laid in the world and most necessary for the Subsistence or Universal Well-being of Mankind (which we call the ten *Commandments*) hence, afraid to own such an enormous procedure, they cast about to cloak it with sought pretences. The sum therefore of Christianity tending to implant in the hearts
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of the Faithful an over-powering Love of Supreme *spiritual Goods* attainable in the next Life, and by consequence to take off their extravagant affection to earthly things, it leaves Man's natural disposition to Truth free to do its Effect, and renders needless that crafty way of design, onely which could byass and pervert the Will from pursuing the way of Nature.

8. Compare we now the positive Motives, *Natural* and *Supernatural*, obliging to Veracity, and we shall find the Hopes and Fears which Christianity proposes to make and keep men Good as infinitely exceeding the Natural ones as Eternity does a moment, abating the intenseness of the Goods and Harms hop't for and fear'd, nay held firmly by *all* and conceited lively by *many* to be Beyond all imaginable comparison greater than the other. Yet experience tells us and none doubts but that these transitory and incomparably-less Goods and Harms are sufficient Motives to oblige Bodies of Men to deliver down Politick or Natural matters of Fact, as the Existence of such former Kings (to blunder which truth there wanted not highest Interests were it conceiv'd feasible) such Eclipses, Wars, &c. Inconceiveably more powerful than must the other Motives be to oblige them to Veracity in such narrations on which the destroying or preserving those highest Concerns depend. And what prevalency Eternal motives had over Temporal ones when they came to clash so neer as one

must forgo the one Hope or the other is seen by the perpetual and constant Sufferings of the Martyrs in all Ages, and the many Persecutions daily and gladly undergone every day in many places for Conscience-sake.

9. In the Natural Commonwealth there are multitudes of men deputed particularly to great Trusts, and some Extraordinary Ceremony done upon them to make them true to such Trusts, nay Oaths by things they highly reverence taken, not onely by those Officers, but sometimes (though rarely) by the Generality to secure their Fidelity. But, what proportion can those *Ceremonies* bear, being but of human Institution, to the *Sacraments* of the Church held to have been instituted by Christ himself? Many of which are common to *all* Christians; some to initiate them most solemnly at first, or to rivet that Initiation with a new military *Tessera*; some to strengthen and cure the Languishing; some to win to Love by Acts of greatest Bounty; Others are proper to empower some as Officers to oversee the common affairs of Faith; all tending to strengthen powerfully the Generality not to prevaricate from the Faith held ever truly received down, and particularly to oblige Governours not to bely themselves or connive at others grossly belying their Forefathers and betraying their *Depositorium*.

10. Though Nature teaches the rudest, that they should not do to another what they would

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not have done to themselves, yet Original Corruption too often makes us prevaricate in practice from that evident Rule: And the Reason is, because while men's Affections are chiefly pitch't on Temporal Goods, hence, in regard They are finite, that is such that if one have more another has less of them, such men are apt enviously to deprive their partaking Neighbours of them, that so the greatest part may fall to their own share: But, such an action can never proceed from, nor thought enter into the most deprav'd nature as to harm another without any good to himself. Now, this in our Case must be put, if we put Christian Fathers mis-teaching their Children Unreceived doctrines for Received, contrary to their own knowledge. For, supposing *Sanctity* in the Church, that is, that multitudes in it make Heaven their first Love, and look on Spiritual Goods as their main concern, which are of such a Nature that none has *less* for another's having *more*, but on the contrary the Multitudes of virtuous persons would help to encrease both Virtue and Glory too in their fellowes and relations; It follows, that had those Fathers in any Age consented to mislead their Posterity from what themselves conceit to be true, they should do the most Extream Harm imaginable to others, without any the least Good to themselves; which is perhaps impossible in *one* single man, more in a *few*, but infinitely in a *multitude*, especially of *good* men

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Moreover, Christ's Law being the Law of Charity, which includes Love of our Neighbour, 'tis directly opposit to the Principles of Christianity to do them an injury of so high a nature as to debar them Heaven and send them to Hell; and all this *gratis*.

11. Again, the greater the Recommends of any Truth is, the greater is the obligation not to bely our selves and it. Let us weigh then the Recommends which Christian Doctrin received from Forefathers had; either as to its serious import, that it be faithfully transmitted to others; or the Universality, conceited Wisdom, Goodness, &c. of the Recommenders; and then balance it with the Recommendation of any Natural or Civil Truth whatsoever, and we shall find it levitate like an inconsiderable feather or ayre in comparison of the vast poize and weighty sway with which the other descended.

12. Nothing is by Nature more deeply or more universally rooted in the hearts of mankind than a dear and tender love of their Off-spring, and a careful provision for their passing their life *well*, that is free from miseries, with a competency of such Goods as are held fitting for their Nature. But, how much more care must Charity oblige Parents to have of their Children, and to use the means they conceive proper to bring them Everlasting and Infinite Bliss in Heaven, and to avoid them Intolerable and Endless Miseries in Hell? Especially, since the performing or pre-

prevaricating from that Duty is of equal concern to Themselves? How strange an advantage superadds Christianity in this particular to the dearest natural love of our selves, or of our nearest Relations who are next our selves !

13. Consider we next the Natural care of not losing one's Credit, and we shall find in common that, the good Opinion of others we call *Credit* or *Repute* is look't upon as a most necessary means to make men fit for human Society or Commerce, and without which none can expect to thrive in his Vocation or live with comfort. Reflecting next on the degrees of Discredit, we find that he who tells a lye for his own advantage, though without any harm to others, with much ado escapes some Disrepute; but, if his lyes be pernicious, he is held an arrant villain; If to nearest Friends and Relations, still greater: If the mischeifs he does by the false words or dealings be exceeding great ones, he is yet more abominable, and proportionally still as the harms, he induces, grow. If the Motives he had to keep him good were very *strong* and efficacious, he is still more enormous; and, as the strength of those preservative motives increase, so is his Malice still enhanc't. But, if he go about all this wickedness boldly and confidently without caring who knows it, especially if he back his most notorious and most pernicious Lyes with deepest Oaths and Perjuries by things most Sacred, he is now conceiv'd to be arriv'd at such a pitch of wicked-

wickedness, that he is no longer to be held a Man, but a Divil Incarnate. But, how incomparably more wicked and consequently disgraceful must that man be, who believing Christ's doctrine to be thus receiv'd and the means to Salvation, should teach his Children otherwise! The believed mischiefs he does his nearest relations, no less than the loss of Heaven and the sad Gain of Hell-fire for all Eternity; the motives he had not to do it, as to his own concerns, full as Infinite; his lye most Notorious to all about him, and even to the whole World. And, if he be a Pastor, who (besides other Sacraments implying most obliging vows not to renounce his Faith) is consecrated by a Particular one to preach Christ's doctrine truly and to preserve his Flock sound in Faith to his power, then to prevaricate from this Duty renders him a Sacrilegious Abuser of the most holy state of life, and most inviolable tie this world, as sanctify'd by our Saviour, has in it. What inconcievable Villany then and consequently Discredit must that man *seemingly* undergo, who shall misteach his own Fancies for doctrines deliver'd; and how impossible is it a World of Forefathers should all conspire to make so desperate and absolute a forfeit of their Reputation and Honesty! 'Tis not possible to be summ'd up or even ghest at, being beyond all proportion. The Advantage then with which Christian Doctrine in the minds of *each*, and the Holy Ghost in the hearts of

of *most* of the Faithful, rivet and confirm this natural care of Credit to the preserving Tradition inviolable, is incomparable and in a manner Infinite.

14. It would require a large volum, to unfold particularly how each virtue contributes to show the inerrable Indeficiency of Tradition, and how the Principles of almost each Science are concern'd in demonstrating its Certainty: *Arithmetick* lends her Numbring and Multiplying Faculty to scan the vast number of Testifiers; *Geometry* her Proportions to show a kind of Infinite Strength of Certitude in Christian Tradition above those Attestations which breed Certainty in Human affairs: *Logick* her skill to frame and make us see the Connexions it has with the Principles of our Understanding; *Nature* her Laws of Motion and Action; *Morality*, her first Principle that nothing is done *gratis* by a Cognoscitive Nature, and that the Body of Traditionary Doctrin is most conformable to Practical Reason: *Historical Prudence* clears the Impossibility of an *undiscernible* revolt from points so-descended & held so Sacred; *Politicks* show this to be the best way imaginable to convey down such a Law as it concerns every man to be skilful in: *Metaphysicks* engage the Essences of Things, and the very notion of *Being* which fixes every Truth; so establishing the scientificall Knowledges which spring from each particular nature by their first Causes or Reasons exempt from change or motion: *Divinity*

vinity demonstrates it most worthy God and most conducive to bring Mankind to Bliss. Lastly, *Controversy* evidences the total Uncertainty of any thing concerning Faith if this can be uncertain, and makes use of all the rest to establish the Certainty of this *First Principle*; and, which settled, secures Scripture as far as is requisit, and all things else that can mainly concern Salvation. To pursue these and many other, Testimonies of Tradition's Infallibleness is not my task at present; I shall content my self with concluding, that, as we have prov'd it self-evident that Tradition, if ever-held to, is an Inerrable Rule; for our four last Discourses have shown its ever-Indeficiency or rather Indefectibleness, scientifically Evident; and as strong as Nature and Grace, strain'd (as we may say) to their utmost, can make it.

COROLLARIES

From

The former Discourses.

1. **N**One can pretend to have FAITH (by the ordinary course of God's Providence) but the Holders to Tradition. 'Tis prov'd by our Conclusion formerly deduc't, (*Disc. 5. §. 15.*) that Tradition is the Rule of Faith, that is, the Ordinary Way to arrive at Faith.

2. None can with right pretend to be a CHURCH but the Followers of Tradition. For, since (*Corol. 1.*) none can have Faith by the ordinary course of God's Providence but the Holders to Tradition, and a Church must be a Congregation of persons truly Faithful, or who have true Faith coming to them by ordinary means, (as we daily experience,) 'tis manifest that none but the Followers of Tradition can pretend to be a true Church.

3. None can be of the Church or any Church but the Followers of Tradition. For, seeing a Church is a Congregation of persons who have true Faith coming to them by ordinary means, (and *Disc. 5. §. 15.*) Tradition is this means, it follows that none are of the Church or any Church but they who have true Faith by this means, that is, who follow the means of Tradition.

Those who renounce Tradition or Immediate Delivery, are ipso facto cut off from the Root of Faith, and cease to be truly-call'd Faithful. For
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seeing that is *to us*, or in the way of reasoning, the *Root* of any Knowledge whence that Knowledge springs, and Faith is no Knowledge in us, (*Disc. 1. 15. and Corol. 1.*) but by relying on the Rule of Faith or Tradition as on its Principle, 'tis manifest that they who renounce Tradition want the Root of Faith, and consequently are not faithful, nor of the Church, but are Dead branches or *Opiners* onely.

5. *That company of men who follow such Ancestours as formerly renounc't Tradition or Immediate Delivery are no less cut off from the Root of Faith.* For, since (*Corol. 4.*) those Ancestours renouncing Tradition formerly were by so doing cut off from the Root of Faith, their Followers (for how many Generations soever they continue) must be so likewise, as wanting and not daring even to pretend to that Faith-causing Principle of Tradition or Uninterrupted Delivery which their Forefathers had renounc't.

6. *They who follow such Ancestours as formerly had manifestly renounc't Tradition (how numerous soever) can never claim to be a part of Christian Tradition or deliverers of Faith.* First, because (*Corol. 5.*) they are cut off from Tradition and so can be no part of it. Next, because Christian Tradition is Indeficient or Uninterrupted, (*Disc. 6, 8, and 9.*) and so none can lay claim to It who cannot lay claim to Uninterruptedness; which those we speak of cannot. The saying then of *Vincentius Lirinensis*, *Id teneamus quod ubique,*

que, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est, and that we must follow *Universality, Antiquity, and Consent*, can onely be meant within the verge of those who adhere to Tradition, or follow the Doctrin formerly deliver'd; not of those who have broke from it; otherwise all Hereticks in the world, especially the Primitive ones, might claim to be part of the Church.

7. *They who pretend themselves REFORMERS In FAITH, do ipso facto, manifest themselves cut off from the Root of Faith and the Church.* For since Points of Faith are Truths, and so have no Degrees in them, but are Indivisible; *Reformation in Faith* cannot mean *mending Faith*, but putting it *anew*. But this presupposes Tradition Interrupted, wherefore Reformers in Faith must renounce Uninterruptedness of Delivery, that is, they must renounce *Tradition*; (*Disc. 6, 8, 9.*) and consequently they are cut off from the Root of Faith. (*Coroll. 4.*)

8. *That Body of men who adhere to Tradition can evidence clearly and plainly who are truly Faithful, who not.* For, since (*Coroll. 4. & 5.*) to those men 'tis all one to renounce Immediate or Uninterrupted Delivery, or follow those who renounc't it, as to be cut off from the Root of Faith; and all one to be Faithful and to rely on that Principle: Again, seeing 'tis evident by clear matter of Fact who rely and proceed upon it, who not; That Body of men who adhere to Tradition can evidence clearly and plainly who are truly

Faithful, who not; and (if Church-Government be instituted by our Saviour and so a Point of Faith, and so descended to us by the Rule of Faith) who are of *the Church*, who not.

9. *None else can give any certain account who are to be held truly Faithful and of the Church, who not.* For since without Tradition both Letter and Sence of Scripture is Uncertain (*Disc. 4.*) and subject to dispute (as we also daily experience) it follows that all the deniers of Tradition are Uncertain who have the right Letter or Sence of Scripture; that is, whom they are to esteem Faithful (or fit to be of the Church) whom not. Again, Tradition being the onely certain Rule of Faith, if one Revolter from it may be admitted, all may, so they profess Christianity in outward talk, which they will easily do: Wherefore, since the Denier of Tradition deems *some one* Revolter from it to be of the Church, that is, himself; he may, nay ought judge so of *all the rest*, provided they talk a few fine pious words of God and Christ, which what Hereticks but did?

10. *None can rationally punish the Revolters from their Faith but that Body which adheres to Tradition.* For since, setting aside Tradition, both Letter and Sence of Scripture is Uncertain, (*Disc. 4.*) the Guilt of those Revolters is also Uncertain: seeing then none can even pretend to correct a fault much less punish it upon *Uncertain* Grounds, none can rationally go about to punish

punish their Revolters from Faith unless it be that Body which adheres to Tradition; and They can. For, in regard Tradition's Certainty is evident to the rudest by common sense; (*Disc. 5. §. 8.*) and likewise 'tis as evident to Governours who revolt from it as it is to know when one disacknowledges and rises against a settled Civil Authority and the Laws of the Land; 'Tis most manifest that the Revolter hath both Passion or Guilt enough to be held punishable, and the Christian Magistrate *evidence* enough of his Fact to go about to punish it. To avoid mistake, I declare that in this Corollary I onely discourse what may or may not be done upon a *Church-account*, what may be fit to be done upon a *State-account*, I am neither able to judge, nor do I meddle with it.

II. *No Company of men hang together like a Body of a Christian Common-wealth or CHURCH but that which adheres to Tradition.* For, since 'tis manifest that every external Commonwealth or Body of men hath some Outward Marks proper to it, by which the Members of it have their coherence or Consistency, and that those are Certain tokens to distinguish it from any other; and as manifest that all the Marks proper to a Church as such depend upon the Rule of Faith, (*Disc. I. §. 15.*) and their Certainty on its; and lastly, that none of the pretended Rules of Faith (all of them building on Scripture's Letter) are Certain, (*Disc. 2, 3, 4.*) without Tradition; it follows that no

other company have any Principle of Distinction from others, that is either of Constitution or Self-preservation under the notion of *Church*, but that which adheres to Tradition. All the loud outcry then made commonly against that Body which adheres to Tradition, call'd *Roman-Catholic*, for accounting it self onely the *Universal Church* and excluding all others is but empty noise, and her claim rational and well-grounded, till it be shown by evident Discourse that the other Pretenders have some other more Evident and Certain Rule to know who are of the Church who not, than this of *Tradition* now produc't and explicated; upon which she proceeds and by which she consists.

12. *There is no arguing against Tradition out of Scripture.* For, since (as we have prov'd *Disc. 4.*) there can be no absolute Certainty of Scripture's Letter without Tradition, this must first be suppos'd *Certain* ere the Scripture's Letter can be rationally held such; and consequently ought in reason to be held *Uncertain* while Tradition is thought fit to be argu'd against, that is, while its Certainty is doubted of. Wherefore since none can argue solidly upon *uncertain* Grounds, none ought to argue against Tradition out of the Letter of Scripture.

13. *None can in reason oppose the Authority of the Church or any Church against Tradition.* First, because, in reality, *Tradition* (rightly understood) is the same thing materially with the *living Voice*
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and Practice of the whole Church Essential, consisting of Pastors and Layity; which is so ample that it includes all imaginable Authority which can be conceiv'd to be in a Church. Secondly, because, in the way of generating Faith, Tradition formally taken is antecedent to, (Disc. 2. §. 11.) and so, in the way of Discourse working by formal and abstracted notions, its notion must be pre-suppos'd and its Certainty establish'd before the notion and Certainty of Faith, consequently of Faithful, and consequently of Church, which must necessarily be a congregation of Faithful. Whence they would argue very preposterously who should go about to oppose Church against Tradition; this being the same as to think to establish the House by overthrowing the Foundation.

14. *None can in reason oppose the Authority of Fathers or Councils against Tradition. This is evident by the former, (Corol. 13.) in regard neither of these have any Authority but as Representatives of the Church, or Eminent Members of the Church: Nor can any determin certainly what is a Father or Council (Disc. 2. §. 11.) till the notion of Church, that is of Faithful, that is of Faith, that is of Rule of Faith, that is of Tradition be certainly establish'd.*

15. *No Disacknowledgers of Tradition are in Due of reason but in Courtesy onely to be allow'd to argue out of Scripture's Letter, Father or Council. For, since, wanting Tradition they have Certainty of none of those (as was prov'd, Disc. 2. §. 11.)*

'tis manifest that, disacknowledging Tradition, while they alledge and talk of *These* they alledge and talk of things themselves do not know to be Certain. Wherefore, 'tis too great a Condescendence and courtesy in Catholiks to let them run forwards descanting with wordish Discourses on those Testimonies after their raw manner; since they might justly take their advantage against them and show they have no right to make use of Principles which their own Grounds can never make good to them; as was *Tertullian's* smart and solid way, *de Prascr. Heret.* c. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. denying them the use of Scripture who deny'd the Church; which would save many an airy confus'd discourse about words, unapt to evidence any thing satisfactorily. Nor can the right of an Opponent to argue *ad hominem* licence them to claim this favour from our Controvertists; in regard we never held that Scriptures Letter hammer'd upon by Criticisms and such pretty knacks of human Learning was the Ground of our Faith nor the way to establish it, but onely as interpreted by the Language and Practice of the Church; nor consequently can we hold it capable to be prejudic'd by such endeavours of private Wits. Though then we should allow them a Copy of the Letter, and consequently so far a liberty to argue *ad hominem* against us; yet we never allow'd their method of arguing from it, as efficacious, either to build or overt Faith; but our learned Controvertists ever held the

direct contrary. Whence, in case they clamour that in not following their wild method we desert Scripture (to avoid which calumny with the vulgar I conceive one reason our Controvertists generally were so civil to them as to cope with them in their sleight way) the unreasonableness of the Calumny is to be made appear, which is quicklier done, not their unreasonable expectation to be satisfy'd.

16. *No Authority from any History or Testimonial Writing is valid against the force of Tradition.* For, since Falshood is as easy to be writ or printed as Truth, 'tis evident those *Books* can give no Testimony to themselves that what they express is *certainly true*; and, if we say they are abetted by the Testimony of other Books, the same question recurs concerning them, in what Age soever they were writ. It remains then that 'tis onely the Acceptation of Men or *Sence* writ in their *Hearts* and so convey'd down from Father to Son that these Books are true Histories and not Fables, which gives them any Authority: But this has plainly the nature of *Tradition*; They have therefore no Authority but by force of Tradition: Therefore they can have no possible force against Tradition; since, if Tradition, or the conveying down from hand to hand *sence* writ thus universally in men's hearts, can deceive us, no such Books can have any Authority at all: Wherefore, not the *Books*, but the *Sence* writ in mens hearts of the Goodness

and Skill of the Authours of those Books (upon which qualifications the Truth of each passage contain'd in those Books is built) is to be alledg'd against Christian Tradition, since 'tis that Sence which authorizes those Books and gives Credibility to those passages, and so is stronger than any *dead* Testimony from the Books themselves. Which devolves into this, that *onely* some great Tradition or *living Testimony* for things past, can, in point of Authority, be *pretended* an equal match to *Christian Tradition* or competent to be alledg'd against it.

17. *No Tradition is alledg'd or alledgeable in reason against Christian Tradition.* That none is alledg'd is Evident from matter of Fact: For, the Adversaries of Catholick Tradition never pretend the Consent or constant Sence of great multitudes deriv'd from age to age by living voice that at such a time former Tradition was relinquish'd, new Faith introduc't, or the old Faith chang'd or abolisht; but onely odd ends or scraps of Histories or other dead Testimonies, according as they light on some passage which seems favourable to them, or may be rendred interpretable that way. Whence, there are almost as many minds as men about the time when any change was made; nay, some of their best Champions, Dr *Whitaker*, and Mr *Powel*, profess *the time of the Romish Churches change cannot easily be told*, and that they cannot tell by whom or at what time the Enemy did sow the Papists Doctrin:

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This, I say, being so, 'tis most Evident they decline the pretence of any Tradition against ours, and the very way of deriving down orally and practically Sence writ in mens Hearts by matter of Fact working on their Senses; and, instead of that, recurr to pitiful shreds and fragments of words, utterly unauthoriz'd if the Tradition for that Books Goodness can fail: And, if Catholick Tradition, which in its source was so largely extended, visible and practicable by all can faulter, ten thousand times more easily may the Tradition for any particular Book, which in comparison of the other can be but of a very obscure Original, fail and deceive us.

Now, that no Tradition is alledgeable against us by Protestants appears hence, that their immediate Forefathers little more than an 100. Years ago being Catholicks; that is, holders of their Faith *no Novelty* but *uninterruptedly descended*, could never conspire to deliver to them any such sence that the Roman Church had alter'd her Faith, since they had the contrary sence writ in the Tables of their hearts. Nor can they have recourse to the Greek Church for a Tradition opposit to ours for any points of Faith in which they differ from us, for they will find none such. Nor is the Greek Church Progenitours to them here in *England*, nor by consequence can they derive traditionarily from them.

18. *No solid Argument from Reason or intrinsic*

secal Principles is producible against Christian Tradition. For, since Arguments, if solid, are taken from Things or Nature, and the Certainty of Christian Tradition is built on the *best* Nature, that is, *Man's*; not according to what is *alterable* in it, but what is (abstracting from disease) absolutely *unalterable*; that is, on Knowledge imprinted by natural Sensations; and this Knowledge strengthen'd and made most lively by the oft-repeatedness of those Sensations, and the import of the Things known: Also, since most efficacious Causes actually appli'd, that is, impossible not to do the Effect, and Effects impossible to be without such a Cause's Existence are engag'd for the ever-continuance or Uninterruptedness of Tradition (as hath been shewn, *Disc. 6. & 8.*) and the force of those preserving Causes strengthen'd by the most powerful assistances of the Holy Ghost, (*Disc. 9.*) or by best Graces superadded to best Nature; 'Tis impossible any solid Argument from Reason should be brought against Tradition.

19. *The arguing by way of some few Instances (as the manner is) can have no force against Tradition's Certainty and Indefectiveness.* For, seeing a pretended Instance of Tradition's failing is a Particular action presumed to be long ago past, and Particulars out of the very nature of being *Particulars* are surrounded by a thousand individuating circumstances or rather constituted by them; that is, are plac'd in the proper sphere of
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Contingency : and that particular Action is put to be long ago past, and so affects not our Senses by Experience (in which is founded the force of Instances, in regard Experimental Knowledge is a necessary Effect of the Things being such as it is known) Nor have we, or can we have without Tradition, any certain knowledge (Coroll. 16.) that the Points of Faith pretended to have miscarried or to have been alter'd then, or else the manner of expressing them, were not mistaken then or misrepresented to us now; nor that Interest (for example) of one party passion between both; ambiguity of words, slightness or confusedness of report grounding the Historians narration, rashness of belief in him, corruption of his Books since they were writ, and innumerable other chances apt to occasion mistake did not intervene; any of which would render the Instance Uncertain, and the Argument from it Inconclusive. Again, seeing we can have Certainty of our own Meaning of our words when we demonstrate, and also of our consequence, it follows that the way for a solid man to answer Traditions pretended demonstrableness must be to show the incoherence of the Terms, and not to bring some old story against it; which were to produce Uncertainty known to be such, against pretended Certainty and not yet known to be other than such; nay whose Evidence we cannot in reason deny till we can solve the connexion of Terms drawn from intrin-

intrinsecal Mediums, on which 'tis built.

20. *The denying Tradition is a proper and necessary disposition to Fanatickness.* For, since no Argument taken from any *dead* or *written* Testimony, (*Coroll. 12. 14. 16.*) nor *living* Testimony of Tradition, (*Coroll. 13. 17.*) nor from any thing in Nature, (*Coroll. 18.*) that is, from any thing *without* us which is a second Cause, is valid against Tradition : It follows that Tradition cannot be denied but, by pretending some Light or Knowledge *within us* deriv'd from the immediate Influence of the *First Cause*. To which pretence helps its difficulty to be confuted; in regard 'tis easie to stand stiff in this Tenet that they see clearly such Truths by an inward Light, and that therefore it were a madness to go about to confute their own manifest Experience; whereas; were Arguments produc't openly, they and their confutations might be publisht together, and the Truth would lie expos'd to the scanning and decision of the Indifferent part of the world, and be clear'd by a few Replies if a right method of discourse be taken. Wherefore, since Nature will easily teach the obstinate deniers of any Principle to avail themselves by the best plea they can to escape confuting, 'tis manifest that Nature will connaturally carry the deniers of Tradition to Fanatick Principles, and that men are so long and no longer preserv'd from Fanatickness than they follow Tradition or the openly declar'd
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Sence of Forefathers either in our Church or some other Congregation.

Again, Tradition being the way of coming to Faith by the open use of our Senses, the denying it must drive the deniers to deny that way, and to recurr to Knowledge had some other way; Not to Knowledge acquir'd by Human Skill, (the Knowledge of such high mysteries being confessedly more than Human) therefore to *infus'd* Knowledge; and this not infus'd by *ordinary* wayes, as Preaching, Teaching of Forefathers and such like (as we experience such Knowledges to be infus'd into us) for this again falls into the way of Tradition; therefore they can onely have refuge to inward Light or Knowledge infus'd *extraordinarily* or without connatural means; to make which the common road of receiving Heaven's Influences is the very definition of Fanatickness.

21. *Fanatick Principles can have no force against Tradition, though unconfutable but by it.* For, since they pretend for their ground a Light within imprinted on such a manner as manifests God the Author, that is, an Effect which onely themselves know and are conscious of, and on the other side nothing appears why such a kind of Impression is impossible, nay 'tis granted possible, 'tis clear none can argue against that inward Light's existence out of the nature of that inward persuasion Fanaticks have, in regard 'tis latent and unknown. It follows then that the way to conclude against it is to shew out of evident

dent Principles the Contrary to these Inspirations
 to be Truth: None therefore (as plain matter
 of Fact testifies) taking the way of arguing from
Principles absolutely evident, or demonstrating,
 but Catholiks or the followers of Tradition, and
 they effecting this by virtue of Tradition, (*Disc.* 5,
 6, 8.) it follows that they and onely they are able
 to confute Fanaticks and conclude their inward
 Light delusive. Again, since a Fanatick builds
 on conceited experience of Divine Inspiration,
 there is no hopes to convince his Judgment
 without producing Demonstration for the con-
 trary; a task onely performable in the way of
 Tradition. Which is enforc't and strengthen'd
 by this Consideration, that the Basis of Tradi-
 tion is natural Knowledge directly imprinted
 by his Senses, in which Knowledges he is unde-
 ceivable; and these Sensations or Knowledges
 are daily repeated, not on one private temper
 but on innumerable millions conspiring in the
 same, that is, Tradition is built on almost Infi-
 nit, daily and most manifest Experiences; where-
 as the conceited Effect of Inspiration, or his strong
 persuasion that God speaks thus inwardly is
 found with consent of tenets in a few onely; and
 liable to deceit by depending upon Fancy, not
 Sense; appears in diseased or mad persons, and
 the Fanaticks contradicting one another though
 both proceeding on the same Principle. With-
 out Tradition's help then 'tis very hard (if not
 impossible) to confute Fanaticks, (as Experi-
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ence also testifies by Protestants being forc't to recurr to Tradition in disputes with them) though very easy with it, or by means of it.

22. *There is no arguing against Tradition without questioning the Constancy of every species in Nature, that is the Certainty of whole Nature.* For, seeing Man's Nature is as necessarily fit to receive the direct Impressions of Objects on his Soul, that is Natural Knowledges, and as necessarily determin'd to work for a motive or reason good or bad, as Fire is to heat or Water to wet, and this absolutely and alwaies abstracting from disease incapacitating him to use his senses or his Fancy, and both these spring out of the very Substance of his Nature as Rational or of such a *species*, which Original Corruption hinders not; it follows that he is as fit for those Operations, and consequently will as frequently perform them as Fire burn, Water wet, Fruit-trees bear fruit, or any other *species* in Nature do its proper effect; that is generally, and onely rarely and contingently fail, unless the Author of Nature order the whole course of it worse for Man than for other things, which were blasphemy to say, and contrary to Experience, since we find a course of Supernaturals on foot, and that they comfort and strengthen man's true nature as hath been formerly declared. Less liable then is the Human *Species* to contingency in those its natural operations than any other kind is. Wherefore,
seeing

seeing Traditions Certainty is grounded upon direct natural Knowledges, and its Indefectiveness on Mankind's Incapableness to act without some motive; to argue against It were to question These, that is, the constancy of the best and best-supported *Species* in Nature, and a *fortiori* the Constancy of the rest.

Note here, that all the Arguments brought by witty Reasoners against Tradition are fetch't from the Contingency of some one or some few Particulars, whence by a wild kind of roving way they would conclude the defectibleness of the Generality or of the entire *Species*: But, because it looks too palpably inconsequent in Logical form to say, *a few can err, ergo all*, therefore they use to bring it in with a *why not*. So that all the arguers against Tradition from natural reason oppose directly any Constancy in the *Species* or Generality, and so are destroyers of Natural Certainty and of their own Arguments to boot.

23. *There is no possibility of arguing at all against Tradition rightly understood, or the living voice of the Catholick Church with any shew of reason.* For, since 'tis evident that Scripture's Copy or Letter is in the whole and every tittle Uncertain (*Disc. 2, & 4.*) without Tradition; as also that the writings of Fathers, Councils, History, and of any written or *dead* Testimony whatever, (*Corol. 14, and 16.*) are utterly unauthoriz'd otherwise than by means of Tradition,

Tradition; and that no *living* Testimony or *Tradition* alledgable against the Tradition we speak of or *Catholick* Tradition, (*Corol. 13. and 17.*) Nor any pretended *Instance* of Tradition's failing has force but by its being faithfully convey'd down by Tradition and depending on Tradition for its Certainty, (*Corol. 19.*) and all Arguments from *Natural Reason* are so weak that they destroy all Certainty in that matter while levell'd against Tradition, (*Corol. 18. and 22.*) It follows, that no Arguments from any Authority publicly appearing in the world, nor yet from *Intrinsic* *mediums* fetcht from second Causes in Nature, can bear any show against Tradition. Nor yet from *private* Effects pretended from the first Cause, call'd *Inspiration* or Light of the Private Spirit (*Corol. 21.*) For, (besides what has been concluded for this point) however this pretence may make the first Syllogism; yet when it comes to be proov'd, that is made appear outwardly, that the First Cause inspir'd thus or thus, no Extraordinary Effects proper to that Cause (as Miracles) being producible, their arguing or Proof is at an end, however their Inward Adhesion stands. There being then no other Argument imaginable, but what is fetcht from Authority *living* or *dead*, or else from Effects or Experience testifiable by those Authorities, or from Proper effects or Causes in their Ordinary course of natural things, or from Extraordinary private and unseen pre-

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tended Effects of the First Cause; and none of these bearing any show against Tradition; 'Tis evident There is no possibility of arguing against Tradition rightly understood, or the living voice of the Catholick Church, with any show of Reason.

24. Tradition is the FIRST PRINCIPLE in the way of Authority as it engages for matter of Fact long ago past. For, seeing that is the First Principle in any Knowledge into which all Knowledges in that kind are resolv'd to establish their Certainty, and all pretended Authorities for any matter of Fact long ago past (Corol. 16.) and consequently all Knowledges caus'd by the means of them, are resolv'd finally into Tradition and depend on it for their Certainty; it follows, that Tradition is the very First Principle in the way of Authority as it undertakes for the truth of matters of Fact long ago past.

25. Tradition, in the matter of Tradition (that is, in matter of Fact before our time) is SELF-EVIDENT to all those who can need the Knowledge of such things, that is, to all Mankind who use Common Reason. This is evident from the former; For, First Principles are to be self-evident to all those who are to use them and proceed upon them, which in our case is the most ordinary vulgar.

26. The Certainty of Tradition being establish'd the whole Body of the Faithful (by which I mean Catholicks) or the Church Essential, is, by rely-
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ing on it, infallibly certain that it is in possession of Christ's true doctrine. For, since Tradition is Self-evidently a Certain way if follow'd (Disc. 5. § 8. & 13.) and both best Nature and best Grace in this world are engag'd that it hath been and shall be ever follow'd. (Disc. 6. and 9.) Again, since the Certainty of what Faith was formerly taught must needs descend to us as matter of Fact formerly past that is, whose Certainty depends on Authority, and Tradition is the First Principle in way of Authority as it engages for matters of Fact formerly past (Corol. 25.) and Self-evident to the proceeders on it (Corol. 24.) that is to the Body of Catholicks; Lastly, since Christian Tradition rightly understood is nothing but the Living voice of the Catholick Church Essential as delivering, 'tis manifestly and manifoldly evident that that Body which relies on It, that is the Catholick Church or (Corol. 6. & 11.) the whole Church Essential, is infallibly Certain that she is in secure possession of Christs true Doctrine.

27. Tradition once establish'd, General Councils and even Provincial ones, nay particular Churches, are Infallible by proceeding upon It. For the same reason; in regard that proceeding on it they proceed upon a Certain and Self-evident Principle; (Corol. 24. & 25.) that is such a one as neither they can mistake nor it mislead them.

28. The Roman See with its Head are particularly

early Infallible by the same means. For, in regard a more vigorous Cause put at first is apt to produce a greater Effect, and the Co-residence, Joynt-endeavours, Preaching, Miracles, and lastly Martyrdome of the two Chief Apostles working upon that City which commanded the greatest part of the world were more vigorous Causes to imprint Christs Doctrin at first and recommend it to the next age than was found any where else; it follows that the stream of Tradition in its source and first putting into motion was more particularly vigorous here than in any other See. Again, since Uninterrupted Publicity of professing Faith makes a greater Visibilty of Faith, which is a manifest advantage to Tradition; and no Patriarchal See but the *Roman* hath continued ever from the Primitive times in a publick Profession of Christ's Faith, being held under by *Barbarians*; hence the *Roman* See (and inclusively their Pastours, and most their Chief Pastour) have a particular title to Infallibility built on Tradition above any other See or Pastour whatsoever. Not to mention and dilate on the particular Assistances to the Clergy of that See, and most particular to its Bishop, springing out of their divinely constituted Office, in regard 'tis a position unacknowledged by Adversaries against whom I am discoursing.

29. *Tradition establisth, the Church is provided of a certain and Infallible Rule to preserve a*

Copy of the Scripture's Letter truly significative of Christ's sence, as far as it is coincident with the main Body of Christian doctrine preach't at first. For, since 'tis certain the Apostles taught the same Doctrine they writ, 'tis manifest the Scripture's Letter was at first (for what of it was intended to signify Points of Faith) - significative of Faith or Sence writ by Miracles, Preaching and Practice in the hearts of the first Faithful: Wherefore, since the same Sence that was preach't at first was preserv'd all along unalterably by Tradition, (*Disc. 6. & 8.*) and the same Sence in mens hearts can easily guide them to correct the alteration of the outward Letter, so as to preserve it significative of the sence first delivered; Therefore, Tradition establisht, the Church is provided of a certain and Infallible Rule to preserve a Copy of the Scripture's Letter truly significative of Christ's sence, as far as Scripture is coincident with the main body of Christian Doctrine preach't at first.

30. *Tradition establisht, the Church is provided of a certain and Infallible Rule to interpret Scripture's Letter by so as to arrive certainly at Christ's Sence, as far as that Letter concerns the Body of Christian Doctrine preach't at first or paints requisit to Salvation.* For, since (*Disc. 6. & 8.*) Tradition preserves the first-deliver'd Sence alive in mens hearts sent down by way of Living Voice and Christian Practice; and these were in the beginning evidently a most Certain way of know-

ing the Sence of the Letter, 'tis evident that they are still such. Wherefore Tradition established the Church is provided, &c.

31. *Tradition establish't nothing can be received by the Church as held from the first or ever, unless held ever.* For, since (*Disc. 5. p. 13. & Disc. 6. & 8. & Corol. 24, & 25.*) Tradition is self-evidently a certain method of conveying down matters of Fact as they were found, it follows that, Tradition establish't, points *not held ever* must be convey'd down such as they were found, that is as *not held ever* and consequently not as held from the first or ever.

32. *Tradition establish't 'tis impossible any Error against Christ's Faith should be received by the Church; that is no Error contradicting Faith can be received as of Faith.* For, since to be received *as of Faith* is (*Disc. 6. & 8.*) to Traditionary Christians the same as to be received *as held ever* or from Christs time, and (*Corol. 31.*) no point at all, though disparate or indifferent, *not-held-ever* can be received as *held-ever*; 'tis evident that much less can an erroneous point *contradicting* what was held ever be received as held-ever.

33. *Notwithstanding Tradition, Erroneous Opinions and (their proper Effects) absurd Practices may creep into the Church and spread there for a while.* For, since, notwithstanding the Certainty of Tradition, the Church is still, according to our Saviour, a Congregation made up

up of *good* and *bad*, and the *Bad* will do like themselves, that is be glad to invent and propagate such Principles as shall make for their own Ends or for Vices; that is, *Erroneous* ones; Again, since it cannot be expected but that multitudes even of *good* men in the Church should in using their private reasons be liable to Error in divers particular points or *Cases*, and that the remoteness of Christian Principles or Points of Faith from the Principles of particular Actions or Cases is apt to make the opposition between them not easily nor clearly discoverable at first, nay the ambiguity in wording them may make them appear at first sight fairly reconcilable till the Terms be distinguish'd and clear'd from equivocation; 'tis very evident that Tradition's Certainty hinders not but *Erroneous* Opinions, and (their proper Effects) absurd Practices may creep into the Church and spread there for a while.

34. *Erroneous Opinions can never gain any solid footing in the Church.* For, since (*Disc. 5. §. 15. Corol. 11.*) the Church is a Body of men relying on *Tradition* or the Authority of *attesting* Forefathers, not on the Authority of *opinating*, these Opinions can never have any firmness in her by means of Authority; and, on the other side, being *Erroneous*, they can never gain any depth of adhesion by being *Demonstrably* true; nor (*Error* being necessarily opposit to *Truth*) can they even maintain their quiet posture by being

being evidently not-opposit to Faith ; It follows that, neither upon the score of Reason nor Authority, can they sink deep into the minds of the Faithful (at least the Intelligent party of them) or gain any solid footing in the Church ; but are subject to be contradicted or have their verity disputed by the searching and unsatisfy'd wits of Opposers.

35. *The Prudence requisit in Church-Government is one Cause why Erroneous Opinions are not immediately but after some long time perhaps to be declared against by the Authority of the whole Church.* For, since a Church is a most Vast and Sacred Common-wealth, and so of the greatest Gravity and Authority imaginable, She is not in prudence to engage it trivially in *sleight* occasions; nor rashly when the point is *unevident*. Wherefore, seeing an Erroneous Opinion, while held but by few, is of *sleight* concern, and so onely fit to be taken notice of by Inferiour Officers ; when universally held, is of *great* Authority amongst the multitude ; She is in Prudence to suspend till its Opposition to Faith be clear'd by the Science of Divinity, and this satisfactorily to a great part of the Opinators ; lest either she should in stead of Tares pluck up Wheat, or use her Authority more to Destruction than Edification by a too hasty decision.

36. *No Erroneous Opinion in Divinity, if Universal and Practicall, can be very long permitted in the Church.* For, since (Carol. 31.) a
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meer Opinion can never gain the Authority of a
 Traditional point, 'tis manifest it can never
 subsist when it is shown to clash with any of the
 said Points: Wherefore, since it is liable to Dis-
 cussion, and men are naturally of different Judg-
 ments and Interests, and the variety and Nature
 of worldly Interest is such that if any thing
 makes for the Interest of some 'tis for that very
 reason against the Interest of another, it will
 excite them to discussion and sifting its Confor-
 mity or Disconformity to Christian Principles,
 which is the way to clear the Terms and make
 it appear. But, especially, seeing Absurd or
 Irrational Practices are the proper Effects of Er-
 roneous Principles, and that our natural Cor-
 ruption inclines men to follow such Practices till
 they be checkt by regard to something held
 Sacred, that is by being shown opposit to Faith;
 it follows that, till this opposition be shown, they
 will infallibly grow on still more and more, till
 they come to such an height of Absurdity that
 they need now no *skill* to discover them: Expe-
 rience teaching us that the most palpable and
 evident method to try the Truth of any Specu-
 lation is to put it into matter and bring it into
 Practice. Those irrational Practices therefore
 must needs after some time discover themselves
 opposit to Christian behaviour, and consequently
 confess the Principle which begot them opposit
 to Christian Faith; which done, it presently
 loses its credit, and is quasht by the incompa-
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rably more powerful force and all over-bearing Authority of Tradition.

37. *Erroneous Opinions and the Irrational Practices issuing from them (though suppos'd Universal and of long continuance) can never corrupt substantially the Judgments or Wills of the Faithful.* For, since (Gorol. 31.) nothing *not-held-ever* or not coming from Christ can possibly be accepted as *held-ever* or coming from Christ, *not* 'tis evident an Erroneous Opinion can come to gain the sacredness and repute of a Traditionary point, nor their Proper Practices the Esteem of Christian Practices; Wherefore, Traditionary Points being the Principles which absolutely possess the Judgments and govern the Lives of the Faithful as Christians, it follows that no Opinion can ever be held by them but in a conceiv'd subordination to Traditionary Points or points of Faith, nor practic't by them but with a conceiv'd subordination and conformity to those Practices which spring from undoubtedly-known Christian Tenets or Traditionary points. Seeing then what is not held and practic't but as conceiv'd subordinate to other Tenets and Practices must needs be less held than those others, may not held at all otherwise than conditionally or upon supposal of such a subordination, 'tis clearly consequent that Traditions Certainty is so powerful an Antidote that bad Opinions and Practices can never corrupt substantially and abso-

absolutely the Judgments or wills of the Faithful.

38. *No Erroneous Opinion or its Proper Practice is imputable to the CHURCH properly and formally taken.* For, since the Church, formally as such, proceeds on Christian Tradition, no such Opinion, nor consequently Practice, is imputable to the Church properly and formally taken, but onely to some men in the Church (materially consider'd) as left to the contingent force of their Private Discourses: that is, indeed, to the Schools not the Church.

39. *'Tis exceedingly weak and senceless to think to impugn the CHURCH by objecting to her such Opinions and Practices.* For, since they concern her not, nor are imputable to her as Church, or to her Members as Faithful, the wise Objection can onely signify thus much, that the Church has men in her who are fallible in their private Discourses or School-disputes; that is, she has men in her who are *men*. A heavy imputation!

40. *The Knowledge of Tradition's Certainty is the FIRST Knowledg or PRINCIPLE in Controversial Divinity, that is, without which nothing is known or knowable in that Science.* For, since Controversy or the Science which establishes the Certainty of Faith depends on these two Propositions, *Whatever God said is true*, and *God said this*, the former of which is *out of Controversy* as we now handle it with our modern Dissenters, and onely the
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later is the subject of our debate : Seeing also (as hath been largely and manifoldly evident) nothing can ascertain us of this but *Tradition*, nor It, unless its *Certainty* be known, it follows, that the Knowledge of Tradition's *Certainty* is the **FIRST** Knowledge or **PRINCIPLE** in Controversial Divinity.

41. *Christ's Promise to his Church (however comfortable to the Faithful) can bear no part in the notion of the Rule of Faith, nor be the first Principle of a Controversial Divine.* For, since Christ's promise to his Church is held as a *point of Faith*, that is, *receiv'd upon* the Rule of Faith, that is, *subsequent* to that Rule, 'tis manifest that it can be *no part* of that Rule nor first Principle in Controversy. Again, the Rule of Faith (*Disc.* 1. §. 4, and 9.) must be so evident as to its Existence that no other Knowledge must intervene between the natural power of Understanding and It, and this in the meanest vulgar; but, that Christ promise his Church *Infallibility* is not thus self-evident but needs other Knowledges to evidence it, unless we will make all come by Inspiration. Besides, if God's Providence laid in second Causes for Tradition's Indeficiency be not Certain in its self, (abstracting from Christ's promise to his Faithful) Tradition can never convey certainly that Promise to us; It must then be assur'd to us by Scripture's Letter ascertain'd onely by imagin'd diligence from Copy to Copy, not by Tradition

tion; that is, that Letter could not be Certain its self, and so fit to ascertain others, till Tradition's Certainty be establish'd antecedently: And, were it suppos'd a true Letter, this Letter (Tradition being as yet suppos'd unknown to be able to convey down certainly Christs Sence) must be interpreted onely by *private skills*; and so, all the Churches Veracity, that is, all Mankinds Salvation must be built on that Private Interpretatio. *Private*, I say; for, in that supposition, till the Scripture's Letter for that point be Interpreted *certainly-truly*, the Churches Veracity or power to interpret it truly is not yet known: which, besides the common Rule that *no Scripture is of private Interpretation*, is particularly and highly faulty in this case, that it would make our Fundamental of Fundamentals, the Certainty of our Rule of Faith, rely on such a Private Interpretation. Moreover, to say Tradition of the Church is Certain *because Christ promist it*, puts it to be *believ'd* not *seen*; and is the same in Controversy, as it is in Nature to say in common, such an Effect is wrought *because 'tis God's will*; which gives no account of that particular Effect, but onely sayes something in common: Wherefore, since the Certainty of the Rule of Faith (it being antecedent to Faith) must be *seen* not *believ'd*, a Controversial Divine ought to make it *seen*; that is, ought to demonstrate its Certainty and Indeficiency by In-
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trinfecal *Mediums* or dependence on Proper Causes. It signifies therefore no more in the Science of Controversy to say *Christ promist*, than in Natural Science to answer to every Question, in stead of showing a proper Cause, that *God wills it*; which is a good saying for a Christian, as is also the other; but neither of them a competent Principle either for Philosopher or Controvertist.

Consent

OF

AUTHORITY.

To the Substance of the foregoing Discourses.

1. **T**HUS far Reason: Let's see how tis seconded by Authority: And first by the Scriptures.

2. For the *Self-evidence* of the Way to Faith, or (which is all one) the Rule of Faith, see the Prophet *Isay* c. 35. v. 8. *This shall be to you a direct way, so that Fools cannot err in it.* That is, *evident to the rudest Vulgar, or self-evident*; else Fools might possibly err in it, in case it needed any Skill of Discourse and were not obvious to Common Sense.

3. Now, what this Self-evident Rule is, is most expressively declar'd by the same Prophet c. 59. v. 21. speaking of God's favour intended to the Gentiles,

Gentiles; that is, of the Law of Grace. *This is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit which is in thee, and my words which I have put in thy Mouth, shall not depart from thy mouth, and from the mouth of thy Seed, and from the mouth of thy Seed's Seed from henceforth for ever.* Here we see God's promise to perpetuate Christ's Doctrine; and on what manner; that is, by Oral Tradition, or Delivering it from Father to Son by word of Mouth or Teaching; not by scanning a Book put in their hands. We see it promise also that this Tradition shall be Indefectible or *Uninterrupted*; and, Lastly, that *his Spirit* (or Sanctity) is both in the Church, and will continue ever with her; which being so, she must needs be Supernaturally assisted by the Holy Ghost (that is, incomparably above the power of Nature) to this Effect of perpetuating Christ's doctrine by Tradition.

4. As pithy and home is that of the Prophet Jeremiah, c. 31. *I will give my Law in their Bowels, and in their Hearts will I write it;* and still more that of St. Paul contradistinguishing the Law of Grace from Moses his Law by this, that the later was writ in *Tables of Stone*, the former in the *fleshy Tables of mens Hearts*. Both as express as can be imagin'd to send us for our Faith to Living Sense in the *hearts* of the Faithful, not to meer *dead Letters* in a *Book*; that is, recommending to us Tradition, which is the
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perfectest and naturalest way imaginable to write them there, as hath been shewn. Note the word *Hearts*, which in the Metaphorical expression is the Principle of Action; not of meer Speculative Knowledge, as is the word *Brain*: Which intimates the *Practical* nature of Tradition; and, that it imprints Christs Law, and conveys it down by Christian Carriage and *Action*; not by *Speculation*: scanning the significativeness of Characters in a Book. Note also, the word *Fleshy*; which signifies, that the manner of writing Christs Law is through the affecting the Soul by her Inferiour part (considering her as she is a virtue of understanding;) that is, by Sensations which make strong and plain Impressions in Mankind according to their *material* part; and so force into them Natural Knowledge: Whence, things thus imprinted are apt to settle themselves solidly and even sink deeply into the most material, gross and vulgar understandings. Quite contrary to which in all regards is the way of beginning with Reading, and labouring to understand certainly, Letters in a Book; which, is a kind of Speculation, and so belongs to the Superiour part of the Soul as she is Understanding; being Artificial, both in the very *Nature* of such Characters, the Skill in *Reading*, and highest Skills requisit to *sence* them with Certainty.

5. After Scripture-verdict succeed next in order

der those of Councils. I will onely mention three in several Ages, leaving multitudes of others. The first Synod of *Lateran*. *We all confirm unanimously and consequently, with one heart and mouth, the Tenets and sayings of the Holy Fathers; adding nothing, subtracting nothing of those things which are DELIVER'D vs (quæ TRADITA sunt nobis) by Them: and we believe so as the Fathers have believed, we preach so as they have TAUGHT.* The Council of *Sardica*, in its Encyclical sent to all Catholick Bishops. *We, have received this Doctrin, we have been taught so, we hold this Catholick Tradition, Faith and Confession.* And the seventh General Council in its second Act. *We, imbu'd with the precepts of the Fathers, have so confest and do confest; In the Third, we receive and venerate the Apostolical Traditions of the Church.* And in the seventh Act, giving their final determination, they declare the Grounds on which they proceed in these words. *We, walking in the King's-high-way (Regiam viam incedentes) and relying on the Doctrin of our holy divine Fathers, and observing the TRADITION of the Catholick Church, define, &c.* Where we see General Councils (that is, the greatest Authority in the Catholick Church) relying on the *Teaching* of Fathers or foregoing Church, and on the Churches *Tradition* as on their *Rule* and the *High-way to Faith*; whence they repute Catholick Tradition, and Faith,

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the same thing. We see also the Amplitude of this Rule, recommending to us *all* Faith, so that nothing ought to be added to it. And how empty a pretence the Fathers in this Council judg'd it to disallow this Rule under pretext of being opposit to Scripture is seen by these words in their First Session. *They who condemn the Teachings of the Holy Fathers and TRADITION of the Catholick Church, and bring for their excuse and inculcate the words of Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, and Dioscorus, saying, Unless we were sufficiently instructed out of the Old and New Testament, we would follow the Doctrins of the Fathers, of the six holy Synods, and the Traditions of the Catholick Church, Let him be accursed.* So that they held private Instruction from Scripture *insufficient* to build Faith on, or (which is all one) to be *a Rule of Faith*; also, that it was ever the common pretence of the most execrable Hereticks of old to decline Tradition, and pretend to *sufficient Light* from Scripture's Letter; and, lastly, that since the Sence of Scripture in points of Faith is not attainable sufficiently, or with Certainty, by the bare Letter of Scripture, and with Certainty by Tradition, and that Tradition brings us down determinate Sence; Tradition is to *sence* Scripture's Letter; and so that Letter no Rule but by virtue of Tradition; seeing, Faith being Sence, and Points of Faith determinate Sences, Faith's Rule must bring us to such determinate Sences.

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6. After Antient Councils, let us give a glance at Fathers, and see what they say to this Point.

Celestin, Saint and Pope to the Fathers of the *Ephesin* Council; *Agendum igitur nunc &c.* Now therefore we must act with a common endeavour to preserve things believed, and retain'd to this very time by **SUCCESSION FROM THE APOSTLES** *Ireneus* cap. 4. *Quid autem &c.* But what if the Apostles had not left us the Scriptures, ought we not to follow the Order of Tradition which they had deliver'd to those to whom they committed the Churches. To which Ordination assent many Nations of those Barbarians who believe in Christ, having Salvation writ by the Spirit in their hearts without characters and Ink, and diligently keeping the Ancient **TRADITION**. In the former we have it told a General Council what their proper task is; namely, to keep or hold fast what was believ'd and kept; and how? by *Succession from the Apostles*, or from hand to hand. In the second, that the Apostles, when they gave Bishops their Charge, ordain'd or made it their Duty to *observe Tradition*; that this Way of Tradition was sufficient to receive Faith upon; that is, sufficient to be a Rule of Faith *without Scriptures*; and that *de facto* it did perform without it that office to many Nations. Lastly, he calls this Delivery from Father to Son *the writing it in their hearts by the Spirit*; that is, the work of the Holy Ghost or *Supernatural*, however it connaturally descended;

scended ; and seems to counterpose this to writing by *characters or Ink* ; as if this were not (so immediately at least) the Holy Ghosts work ; In regard (as plain reason tells us) the Sence of those Letters , or Faith , must either be had by those Inward Characters writ in the Readers hearts by God's Spirit ; and so It , not the Ink writes it there ; or else by human or Natural Skills, which are not attributable to our Sanctifier, the Holy Ghost.

7. The same Father (*lib. 1. cap. 3.*) For though there be diverse Tongues in the world, yet the *virtue of Tradition is one and the same. The preaching of the Church is true and firm, in which one and the same way of Salvation is shown over the whole world.* Here we have but *one* Rule of Faith, or way to Faith, and this the *preaching* or living voice of the Church ; which is not onely said to be *true* but also *firm* ; that is, the Certainty of its Truth is built on *solid Grounds*, or founded in the nature of things order'd by God's special Providence to that end. To show which hath been the aim of my present endeavours.

8. Origen is more express. 1. *Periarchôn, Servetur verò &c. Let the Churches preaching deliver'd from the Apostles by order of Succession, and remaining in the Church to this present be preserv'd. That onely Truth is to be believ'd, which differs in nothing from the Churches Tradition.* And 29. in *Matth.* We ought not to believe otherwise than as the Churches
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of God have deliver'd us by Succession. Where he directly makes Tradition the Rule to judge what's found ; what not ; that is , *the Rule of Faith.*

9. *Tertullian lib. de carne Christi.* If thou beest but a Christian, believe what is (traditum) deliver'd. And, speaking to an Heretick ; By renouncing what thou hast believ'd , thou provest that , before thou didst renounce it , what thou believedst was otherwise : It was then deliver'd otherwise : Moreover , what was Deliver'd , that was True , as deliver'd by those to whom it belong'd to deliver ; Wherefore , renouncing what was Deliver'd , thou hast renounc'd what's True. So that in this Father's Judgment a *Christian* and *Follower of Tradition* are the same , and that to renounce what comes by *Tradition* is to renounce *Truth* ; which amounts to this , that *Tradition* is the *Test of Christianity* , and *Rule of Faith.* Also he intimates that it belongs to some to deliver , to some not ; and , if to any , to whom but those who lay claim and adhere to *Tradition* or *Delivery* , and are in possession of it ? not to those who are known to have broken from *Tradition* and impugn its Certainty.

10. *Athanasius (in lib. de Synodis.)* They have declar'd themselves to be *Unbelievers* by Seeking what they have not ; All therefore that are *Seekers of Faith* are *Unbelievers.* They only to whom *Faith* comes down from their *Ancestors* , that is , from *Christ* by *Fathers* , do not

seek, and therefore they onely have Faith. If thou comest to Faith by Seeking, thou wast before an Unbeliever. And, in his Discourse against Paulus Samosatenus de Incarnatione. He that searches after those things which are beyond his strength stands upon a precipice; but he that sticks to Tradition, stands out of danger. Wherefore we perswade you, which also we perswade our selves, that you retain the Faith Deliver'd (Traditam Fidem) and avoid prophane words of Novelty. I wish the Protestants would seriously weigh the import of these Sayings of this Father, and consider what it was which sustain'd him who was a Pillar of Faith in his dayes; and then, applying it, see whether it fits to Catholicks or Them, They would plainly discern that that which they prize themselves most for, that is for taking their Faith out of Judgment, by finding and seeking it in the Scriptures, is alone enough to shew them not to be truly Faithful; That God has promised a perfectly secure way to give them true Faith, that is, by believing Ancestours. That they who do not so stand upon a precipice, seeking what's beyond their power; that is, to hammer a certain Faith out of Scripture's Letter by their private Wit. Which reflected on, a little reason, enlightned by so plain and manifold Experiences, will easily tell them that 'tis the shallowness of their Grounds, unable to satisfy Rational Nature, which makes so many of theirs take upon them to seek for Faith, and so leave them;

them; and the solid secureness, connaturalness, and satisfactoriness of ours which makes few or none leave us; and those who do, 'tis easie to discover the motives of their revolting.

11. Yet one more from this Illustrious Father; as one whom by reason of his Famous Contrasts with the impious *Arians*, it concern'd to be more express in inculcating and sticking to the true Rule of Faith. He writing to *Epiſtetus* Bishop of *Corinth*. 'Tis to be answer'd (saith he) to those things, which alone of it self suffices, that those are not of the Orthodox Church, and that our Ancestours never held so. So that the living Voice of the Church, Tradition, or Belief of Ancestours, is held by him a sole-sufficient Rule of Faith, and the onely Answer to be given why we reject points from Faith, or admit them into it; that is, an Evident Reason for such a carriage; for otherwise another Answer would be requisit.

12. We will be shorter in the rest. *Clemens Alexandrinus Stromatôn 7º*. As if one of a man becomes a beast, like those infected by *Circes* poysen, so he hath forfeited his being a man of God and Faithful to our Lord, who spurns against the Churches Tradition, and leaps into Opinions of human Elections. *Basil* against *Eunomius*: Wouldst thou have us all perswaded by thee, proffer your Conceits before the Tradition of Faith, which perpetually hath conquer'd under so many holy men. And, speaking against two other He-

reticks, *Sabellius* and *Arius*; Let *TRADITION* bridle thee: Our Lord taught thus, the Apostles preach't it, the Fathers conserv'd it, our Ancestours confirm'd it; be content to say as thou art taught. We have it clear then that the Renouncer of Tradition is none of the Faithful, that is cut off from the Root of Faith (see *Corol. 4.*) that all is men's *Conceits* and *Arbitrary Opinions* (which the word *Hereſie* imports) that is opposite to *Tradition*. We have, lastly, the whole course of our Faith's descent from Christ to us; yet not a word of descending by Scripture or Letters in Books, but by the way of Preaching and Teaching, that is, *Oral delivery* and Sence writ in men's hearts.

13. I omit many other Fathers, but I must not *S. Austin*. *Ea potius credam, &c.* I will rather believe (saith he, *contra Epistolam Fundamenti*) those things which are celebrated now by the consent of learned and unlearned; and are confirmed throughout all Nations by most grave Authority. And, again; 'Tis manifest that the Authority of the Catholick Church is of force to cause Faith and Assurance. Which (Authority) from the best establish'd Seats of the Apostles even to this very day, is strengthened by the Series of Bishops succeeding them, and by the Assertion of so many Nations. In both places he makes the consent of Learned and Unlearned, Bishops and conspiring people, continu'd down to these dayes (that is, the living voice of the Church

Church Essential, or *Tradition*) the most grave Authority, apt to *ascertain* us and cause *Faith* ; that is, he makes Tradition the *Rule of Faith* ; and builds its strength (as we also do) on the multitude and consent of the Asserters or Testifiers of its descent. Also in his 58. Epistle, *The Faithful* (saith he) *do possess perseveringly a RULE OF FAITH common to little and great in the Church.* Where every word is Emphatical ; That the Churches voice is the Rule of Faith : That this Rule is common to *Learned* and *Unlearned* ; that is, able to satisfy the acutest Discourers and yet understandable by the rudest vulgar : Lastly, that they *hold* it, and that perseveringly or unshakenly ; which shews it self-evident ; else both, the unlearned at least, might come to doubt of it. (See *Disc.* 5. §. 8, 9, 10, 11.

14. Thus much for the credit of Tradition its being the Rule of Faith, Certain, and Uninterrupted. But how shall we know who enjoys this Tradition, or what points have been handed down by it from the beginning ? Must we not run to Private Expositions of Scripture to be assur'd of this, or at least to Libraries of Books writ in all former Ages to see if perhaps their Authours might have dream'd of our now difficulties, and then prophesied us a satisfaction to express and ample, that no cavil can avoid it ? No, we have manifest Certainty of it other wayes, if we may trust the Fathers. We will
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onely alledge two, both very Antient, and great Masters of Controversy against the Hereticks of their times. *S. Ireneus lib. 1. cap. 3. All those who will hear Truth may at present perfectly discern (adest perspicere) in the Church the Tradition of the Apostles, manifest in the whole World.* That is, the Doctrin of the present Church (proceeding upon or adhering to Tradition) is a *manifest* Argument, that what it teaches *now* was *delivered* by the Apostles. And *Tertullian contra Marcionem. That is manifestly True which is First, that First which is from the beginning, that from the beginning which is from the Apostles. In like manner that will manifestly appear to have been delivered by the Apostles, which shall be establisht as Sacred in the Churches of the Apostles.* Where first he ascends, and confounds Novelty or Heresie, by shewing that the *Priority* of what they left, argues it to have been *ever* or from the Apostles, and so *True*; and then proves, and *manifestly* too, that that was delivered from the Apostles which is found *establisht* (that is held to be receiv'd, as all his former Doctrin runs) as Sacred in the Churches at present, which were founded by the Apostles. But he is yet more expresse in his first Book against the same Heretick: *Nothing is to be acknowledg'd a Tradition of the Apostles, but what is at this present day profess'd (for such) in their Churches.* So that he sends us not to Volumes of Histories and other Writers (which
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if Tradition can fail, are of no Authority) to finde what was the Antient or Primitive Traditions, or what the Apostles taught or *delivered*, but onely to the living Voice of the present Churches; which had been but a weak procedure, in case their holding now a thing *deliver'd* were not argumentative that it was *deliver'd ever*; which is the substance of my proof *a posteriori*, for the Indefectiveness of Tradition. And, lest it should be imagin'd that this Argument loses its force by tract of time, or the long-continuance of the Church, *Peter Chrysologus*, in his 85. Sermon, secures us from that danger. *A Christian mind knows not how to bring into dispute those things which are strengthen'd by Tradition of the Fathers, and even (ipsis temporibus) by Time it self.* To omit here that he makes it the very temper of a *Christian* mind not to question Tradition, he maintains Continuance of Time to be so far from weakening the Certainty of Traditionary points, that it contributes to strengthen them more. And the reason is, because the Churches Doctrine *spreads* by Time, and so the sway of Tradition's descent is *ampler*; besides that every new Degree of Continuance establishes its Title to Possession, and makes it hainouser to revolt from it. And, Effects show our Discourse true; for, there were more variety of Heresies, that is Renouncers of Tradition, in the first 400 years after the Apostles, than we read of in any 400 years

years since ; Nor (that we may use a familiar Instance in Human Tradition) does (I conceive) any man living more doubt now of *Mahomets* or *Julius Caesar's* existence, than within an 100 years after they liv'd.

15. A few Notes, well weigh'd, will strengthen the force of these Allegations ; which even at first sight seem to look very favourably on our Cause. I mind my Reader then,

First, That almost every Citation alledg'd is of Councils or Fathers speaking directly against Hereticks ; that is, in such Circumstances as put them to declare what fixt them Catholicks, and what made the other Hereticks.

Secondly, That though some Fathers and Councils speak highly of Scripture, as that it contains all Faith, &c. 'Tis first to be markt whether they speak of Scripture *Senc't*, or as yet *to be Senc't* ; and, if the later, by whom ; or whether any Fathers say that Scripture wrought upon by private Interpretation and Human Wit is apt to *ascertain* Faith (or be the *Rule of Faith*) which is the true point between the Renouncers of Tradition and us.

Thirdly, They shall observe it frequent in Fathers to force Hereticks to accept the Sence of Scripture from those who gave them the Letter of Scripture ; and very frequent to *sence* that Letter (even when dark) by Tradition ; but never to bend Tradition to the outward show the Scripture's Letter seems to bear as interpreted
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by human Skills ; or to say Universal Tradition is insufficient or uncertain, unless the Scripture's Letter thus interpreted came to clear or assist it.

Lastly, 'tis impossible they should hold Scripture thus interpretable the Rule of Faith ; it being notorious that most Hereticks against whom they writ, held it theirs ; And so had they held Scripture thus interpreted the Rule of Faith, they could not have held them Hereticks, since they adher'd stilly to that Rule or Root of Faith, however they might err in many particular Tenets. Not to repeat how all the Properties of the Rule of Faith are utterly incompetent to Scripture's Letter.

This done, all the Testimonies for Scripture against Tradition lose their edge. That is (if my discourse also hold the test) it will appear by way of *Fact*, as it did before by Argument, that there is neither Reason nor Authority against Tradition. So that I have no more to do but to show that our Church at present grounds her faith on Tradition as formerly ; which done it follows all the Substance of my foregoing Discourses is but an Explication of our Churches Sence.

16. To know then our Churches Sence in this point, we will not fetch our Testimony from private Authours (as is the Protestants mode when they would affix any thing upon her) but we will attend to what her own living voice pronounc't in her late famous Representative, the Council of *Trent*. Where, in every Session

Session definitive of Faith, It professes to follow **TRADITION**, either in most express or equivalent Terms. As, Session 4th. *The Holy Synod clearly seeing that this Truth and Disciplin (Christ's Doctrin) is contain'd in the written Books and Traditions without writing; which received by the Apostles from Christ's own mouth, or from the very Apostles, the Holy Ghosts dictating, as it were deliver'd by hands, (per manus Traditæ,) have come down to us &c. And Again, Also the TRADITIONS both belonging to Faith and Manners, as dictated orally by Christ or the Holy God and conserved by CONTINUAL SUCCESSION in the Catholick Church &c. Session 5. The Holy Council following the Judgment and Consent of the Church. Ibid. p. 4. As the Catholick Church where ever diffus'd hath alwayes understood it; For by reason of this RULE OF FAITH according to the TRADITION of the Apostles &c. Session 6. It professes to follow that Doctrin which Christ taught, the Apostles deliver'd, and the Catholick Church, the Holy Ghost suggesting, perpetually (or uninterruptedly) retain'd. Session 7. The Holy Synod adhering to the Holy Scripture, the Traditions of the Apostles, and the Consent of Councils and Fathers. Session 13. The sound and sincere doctrin which the Catholick Church hath ever kept, and will ever keep to the end of the World. And, again, For so ALL OUR ANCESTORS that ever were in the true Church*

Church of Christ most openly have profest. And yet again cap. 3. *This Faith was ever in the Church.* So cap. 4. *It was ever held in God's Church.* More such like Expressions are found in the same Session. But to proceed. Session 14. chap. 1. *The Consent of ALL the Fathers EVER understood &c.* Chap. 5. *The Church of God NEVER taught nor held &c.* Chap. 5. *The Universal Church EVER understood that &c.* Chap. 7. *It was ever held in God's Church.* Chap. 8. *It was PERPETUALLY COMMENDED by our Fathers to Christian people. No Catholick EVER held &c.* And in the same Session concerning Extream Unction, alledging S. James his Text, it adds, *By which words AS THE CHURCH HATH LEARNED BY TRADITION RECEIV'D DOWN BY HANDS, he teacheth &c.* And Can. 3. *As the Catholick Church EVER understood from the beginning &c.* Can. 6. *Which the Catholick Church EVER observ'd from the beginning, and doth observe &c.* Session 21. chap. 1. *The Council professes to follow the Judgement and CUSTOME of the Church.* Chap. 2. *It declares that this power has PERPETUALLY been in the Church.* Session 22. *That the antient Faith and doctrine may be retain'd in the Church.* Ibid. cap. 1. *As the Catholick Church EVER understood and taught.* Chap. 1. *According to Apostolical TRADITION.* Session 23. *Holy Writings show it, and the TRADITION of the Catholick Church EVER taught it.* Chap. 2. *They*

They are known to have been in use from the very Beginning of the Church. Session 24. The Holy Fathers, Councils and the UNIVERSAL TRADITION of the Church have ALWAYS taught. And speaking of some Errors, It pronounces them different from the Catholick Church, and from the CUSTOME approved SINCE THE APOSTLES TIME. Session 25. The Catholick Church instructed by the Holy Ghost, teaches out of Sacred Writings and the ANTIEN T TRADITION of the Church, &c. According to the use of the Catholick and Apostolick Church [TRADITAM] deliver'd from the first (or Primitive times of Christian Religion, &c. More Expressions of the like strain are found in this Session. And, to close up all, in their Acclamation they use this form of words: This is the Faith of Blessed Peter, this is the Faith of the Fathers, this is the Faith of the Orthodox. From which Testimonies, note we.

17. First, that the Council in every Session, (not one excepted) where Points of Faith are handled, constantly professes to follow TRADITION.

Secondly, It layes claim perpetually to *Uninterruptedness* of this Tradition, as appears by the words, *ever, alwayes, from the Apostles times, from the beginning, from the Apostles have come down by hands to us, The Church hath alwayes understood, held, openly profess, taught, hath ever kept, and will ever keep, perpetually*
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commended by our Fathers, hath learned by Tradition received down by hands, hath ever observed, and such like. Plainly showing that this Persuasion of our Faith's descent uninterruptedly is deeply and unanimously rooted in the heart of the whole Catholick Church. Which strengthens our Doctrin, Disc. 8. §. 2. and 3.

3^{ly}. It makes the Suggestion of the Holy Ghost, or Sanctity in the hearts of the Faithful, efficacious to perpetuate the delivery of received Doctrin. See Sess. 6. *Decreto de Justificatione*, Sess. 13. *do & S. Euchar. Sacramento*, and many other places. The very point I went about to explicate in my ninth discourse.

4^{ly}. 'Tis observable that though it mentions the Holy Scriptures also with Tradition, yet this is both very rarely; and, when it does so, It onely expresses that Faith is *contain'd* in them; but, when it brings Places of Scripture to ground Definitions upon, It perpetually professes to Interpret them by Tradition; Which is most Evident both by its decreeing this in common, Sess. 4. *That none dare to interpret Holy Scriptures against the Sence which our Holy Mother the Church hath held and does hold*; meaning that Sence in the Hearts of the Faithful is the Rule to interpret Scripture by, (see *Corol. 30.*) As also by several Instances; Sess. 5. §. 4. Sess. 14. Can. 3. Sess. 22. cap. 1. and (to omit others) in that most remarkable place Sess. 14. In which after the Text of S. James alledg'd for Extream

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Unction, the Council subjoins, *In which words, as the Church hath learn'd by Apostolical Tradition received down by hands, he teaches, &c.* Where *Tradition* is most evidently made the Rule which instructs and guides the Church in interpreting Scripture: And 'tis observable that the Council no where grounds any definition on Scripture, but at the same time she grounds her Interpretation of Scripture on Tradition; which devolves into this that the Council makes Tradition her onely Rule to know *Certainly* Christ's Sence, or Points of Faith; that is, (in proper speaking) *the onely Rule of Faith.*

18. But why then is the Holy Scripture made use of at all by the Council, and that so solemnly; nay, and (which is to be noted) constantly put before Tradition? To satisfy fully this difficulty 'tis not the proper season at present; yet, being a good point and worth clearing, I will not totally neglect it. We may observe then that when we read any Book writ by an Authour we much esteem, but yet such a Book as requires studying, (*Aristotle's* for Example, or some other such whom we hold Scientifical,) we sometimes hope well (as it were) when we apply our own Industry to find out his meaning, and have a kind of respect for what we conceive to be his Sence; yet his Authority takes not full hold of our Understanding, by reason the way we take is not evidently convictive that this is his Certain Sence; But if the Point he writes on
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be first clear'd to us through a Scientificall discourse by word of mouth, made by some Interpreter vers'd in his Doctrine and perfectly acquainted with his meaning, we have as it were new Eyes given us to look deeply and thoroughly into his Sence; and, by this Security of arriving at it, his Authority (in case we highly esteem'd it) has now its full force upon us to strengthen our Assent, according to the degree of power it had upon our Understanding. Now, what a well-skill'd and insighted Interpreter or scientificall Explicater of the point is to such an Authour, the same is *Tradition* to Scripture. For, This bringing down Certainly Christ's Sence in every Point of Faith, It easily and securely guides us to the true meaning of Scripture in those passages which concern such a point; whereas, the wordish way of Grammar and Criticism being evident by Principles to be *Ambiguous*, and by Experience to lead men into *different* Sences, it can never satisfy us *thoroughly* that the Sence we arrive at by this method is *infallibly* the true one or Christs, and so never engages *certainly* the Authority of GOD'S WORD. And, hence, it is that Scripture thus interpreted is of sleight force, and at best good onely for Ecclesiastical Rhetorick or Sermons; where the concern is not much if the Preacher misses in this particular passage so the Substance of the Point he preaches on, or his Text, be truly Christ's doctrine; nor is Scri-

pure thus interpreted even a competent proof
 in the Science of *School-Divinity*, as being Un-
 certain and so unapt to beget Science; whence,
 Intelligent Divines quoting and building on
 Scripture are to be suppos'd to judge the Sence
 they build on to be the Churches, and so they
 are presum'd to go to work as Faithful, or parts
 of *Ecclesia docens*; or else they lay true Science
 first, which is ever agreeable to Faith; and so,
 when any Text concerns a demonstrated point,
 they know by Science what the true Sence of
 that Point must be. Much less is Scripture
 wordishly interpreted apt to build Faith on;
 the unwaveringness of which kind of Assent must
 be grounded and secure in the Principles which
 beget it, and not meerly actually such as it were
 by accident; whereas Interpretations thus made
 (Faith's Principles in this case) are liable to
 possible if not probable mistake. This will be
 clearer by a parallel made by a learned Au-
 thour; worth inserting, because it strengthens
 our Discourse by a new Consideration. Let
 a Critick and a skill'd *Carpenter* read *Vitru-
 vius* his Book of Architecture, the Critick has
 but a dim, dry and uncertain conceit of what
 he reads as to the truth of the things; but
 the *Carpenter* or Architect, by reason of some
 Principles and Practice he has already of
 those matters, understands him more thorough-
 ly, and makes lively and firm conceits of the
 truth and excellency of what he writes; Such
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is the Practical way of knowing Christs Sence, or Tradition, to the interpreting Scripture, us'd by the Catholick Church; in comparison of the Critical Method affect'd by others. In a word, Tradition gives us *Christs Sence*, that is, the *Life* of the Letter ascertain'd to our hands, which therefore must needs move the Letter, its *Body*, naturally; The other way takes the *dead Letter*, and endeavours to move it Artificially to counterfeit that Life which it truly wants.

19. To apply this Discourse to our matter in hand. Tradition securing to us the Scripture's Letter truly significative of Christ's Sence, and also the true Sence of that Letter in Points of Faith deliver'd, (See *Corol.* 29. & 30.) it follows that the Scripture alledged by the Church relying on Tradition for its Rule, engages certainly and fully the very Authority of the Divinely-inspir'd Writer himself; and gives that Testimony the whole Effect upon our understanding, which that Sacred Writers Authority deserves to have given it. No wonder then the Council, proceeding upon Traditionary Interpretation as it constantly declares it self to do, honours Scripture-Testimony so as to put it before Tradition or the delivery of Christs Doctrin from hand to hand: Scripture, thus alledg'd and secur'd, having the same force as if the Apostle or Evangelist himself should sit in the Council, and

by way of living voice declar'd his own Sence in the Matter; to whom; thus present, what defence the Council would have given is obvious to be imagin'd. Hence, also, the Protestant may see what high esteem our Church gives to *Gods Word*, truly so called; that is, having *Gods Sence* certainly-known to be such; in it: and that tis onely the outward Letter as us'd to hammer a Faith out of by wordish skills; that is, indeed, their Method of interpreting it (which, by reason of its Uncertainty falls short of engaging the Sacred Authority of *Gods Word*) we slight and undervalue: And most justly, since tis the having no better way to work on Scripture, which has brought Scripture it self, thus us'd, to such abuse and contempt, as appears in the carriage of our *Bedlam* of new Sects in *England*. I expect here some mighty man of talk, but very weak Speculator, should object that this is an excellent way to bring all into our Churches hands. But till he can prove that both Letter & Sence of Scripture are knowable, with such a Certainty as to build on them that most firm Assent call'd Faith, by any other way than this of Tradition, I can neither hinder my Inferences nor will he ever be able to confute my discourse.

20. Thus much to show evidently that the Substance of the Doctrin we have given in our former Discourses; is the very Sence of our Church at present; and that her present Sence
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in this matter is agreeable to the Judgment of Antient Fathers and Councils. I have no more to do now but to show that at the very time of the Breach here in *England*, the Catholick was found adhering fast to this Rule of *Tradition*, renounc't by the Protestant. This is evident by the Protestants own confession; For, as oft as you hear them alledge that *England was formerly overgrown with Popery, that the new Light of the Gospel hath of late discovered it self, that they reform'd in Faith, that the former Church errd*, and such like expressions which naturally must burst out from them, so oft you hear them acknowledge themselves Deserters of Tradition and Innovators. Which Expressions of theirs (by the way) easily manifest to the most vulgar understanding who 'tis that hath renounc't Tradition; whence, it being also easily evidenceable to the rudest capacity that Tradition is a most certain way of bringing down Faith (*Dis. 5. §. 8.*) the most vulgar Soul is capable of knowing which Profession it is to follow. For the two former points being known, they are Certain by motives within their own Ken, that Protestants have renounc't the Certain way to bring down Faith; but, that we renoune't Tradition of old is unacknowledged by us, disputable, and onely knowable by skills they are not Masters of. Common Sense then teaching them they must guide themselves

by reasons they are capable of, and not by reasons of which they know nothing, and that God requires no more at their hands than they can do, Gods goodness has provided for those weak people, out of the very Confessions of Tradition's deserters, Certain means to judge whether they ought to be Catholicks or Protestants. But, to return whence we diverted.

21. It is not onely the Protestants own Confession, but the onely Profession of the Catholick Clergy in the very nick of the Breach manifests our claim and constant adherence to Tradition. Whose Declaration, found in the Synodal Book, 1559. begins thus. *Because by relation of publick Fame, it hath lately come to our knowledge that many Tenets of Christian Religion, hitherto received and approv'd by the Publick and Unanimous consent of Christian Nations, and BROUGHT DOWN BY HANDS even from the Apostles to Us, are call'd into doubt; Therefore, &c.* Where we find them stick firmly to Tradition; And, insisting on this Principle, they proceed to make a Profession of their Faith, which they exhibit to the Bishops to be given to the Lord Keeper; but the State having by power overborn the Votes of the Reverend Convocation, and persecuting them for their constancy, the Breach ensu'd. The Catholick cleaving fast to his Old Rule Tradition; the Protestants chusing

chusing a new one of Scripture privately interpreted ; whose vanity a little Reason makes them see, but Experience perfectly find ; and relinquishing the Antient Rule so demonstrably self-evident, secure and solid ; By which means they became cut-off from the onely Certain way to know Christs Sence, that is from the Root of Faith, and consequently from the Body of the Church ; The Guilt of which Fact neither Human Authority, Multitude, Prosperity, Continuance, nor yet all their Voluminous wordish Excuses will ever be able to efface.

ANIMADVERSIONS

On

*Dr. Pierce's Sermon: Also, on
Mr. Whitby and Mr. Stillingfleet, where
they touch the Way lay'd in the fore-
going Discourses.*

In

Three Appendixes.

To which is Added,

A Fourth

Subverting Fundamentally and Manifolgly my
L. of *Down's* DISSUASIVE.

Pfalm 63.

Sagittæ parvulorum factæ sunt Plagæ eorum.

Anno Dom. 1665.

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T R A N S I T I O N

To

The following

A P P E N D I X E S.

I Have finish'd my Discourse: how satisfactorily must be determin'd by the Judgment of my Readers, and Confutation from mine Adversaries. But I account those onely my Proper Judges and competent Adversaries who lay their Principles ere they discourse, and weigh the efficaciousness of their Testimonies in the Scales of Reason ere they alledge them. If I find a man laying no Principles of his own, but supposing them, and making account all men must admit them out of respect to him or his party, and yet bend all his endeavours to cavil at Principles laid by others to ascertain and establish the Groundwork of Christianity; If I find one ignorant of or resolv'd against the onely-Certain method and Rule of Discourse, viz. that No Position deserves Assent unless the Connexion of its Terms be Evident, which must either be when they are Evidently connected of themselves (of which nature ought to be all First Principles) or made evidently connected by the interposition of some other, which we call Evident-by-consequence or Deduction: Lastly, if I find a man

so

wedded to Parrat-talk of Ayr and Sounds that he thinks it a rare thing to load margents with Citations, without first distinguishing them and considering what strength each ought to have according to rational Principles; I decline such an empty Soul for my Judge, and sleight him as mine Adversary. And lest any should impute this carriage to me for fastidiousness I offer my Reason for it. For, to cavil at Principles and yet go about to lay none himself, is the method of a Sceptick; and from him indeed I must suffer it, if I cannot force him to hold his tongue: But, that one who pretends himself a Christian, that is an Holder of Christ's Law, that is (if he goes consequently) a Relier upon some First or Self-evident Principle for holding that Christ said thus or thus, should be permitted to impugn Principles brought to ascertain fundamentally that point, and yet himself lay none to do that Effect (as is the Custome of the Impugners of Tradition) is to let him behave himself like a Rencouncer of Christianity, and to fight against any assuredness of Christianity; that is, to contradict himself and all his own positions as he is Christian; which permission is unreasonable according to Maxims of Common Sence, and illegal by the Rules of true Logick. Again, if the clear light of Understanding gives it manifest, that nothing can be seen intellectually but what is either Evident by its own Light or by Deduction in the manner declared, 'tis as Evident that to frame

Dis-

Discourses in another method than this, or at least loose Discourses that have no Connexion involv'd in them, enabling them to bear the Test of this Method, can be onely to talk Uncertainties, that is, of we know not what: Which is unworthy a Man, much more a Schollar. And, lastly, Since it is evident by Reason that every sleight Authority is not comparable to that of God's Church, 'tis Evident likewise that Reason is to weigh what is due to Authorities; and that, No Authority deserves any Assent further than Reason gives it to deserve. Now, this being so, to alledge Authorities undistinguishingly, whereas there is such diversity of degrees in them that perhaps there are no two to be found perfectly alike in merit, is such a wild proceeding hand over head, such a careless saying any thing to no imaginable purpose but purely to talk, that no sober Discourser can think it fit to spend time in combating such an airy Adversary.

2. *I make it my request to my intelligent Reader (for I write to none but such) that he would reflect back on the Method I have taken in my short Discourse; and he will see that (however my Performance speeds) I pursue the Way of Evidence, and aim at least at perfect Science of the point in hand. He will see I take my rise at the meaning of the words Rule and Faith; this known, I establish my first Principles in this present matter to be these, a Rule is a Rule, Faith is Faith; hence I proceed to discover diverse Attributes necessary*

cessarily connext with what is meant by those two words; and if, to avoid witty cavil, I decline the preteuce of rigorous Definitions of either word, without pressing the Essentialness of any of those Attributes to the Natures of Rule and Faith, I hope I shall merit both pardon and thanks from those who look for satisfaction; For, as long as those Attributes must necessarily accompany the Rule of Faith, I do my work without engaging into nicer disquisitions. Those Attributes being shown necessarily connected with the notion of Rule of Faith, I apply'd them to my matter in hand by means of these two Propositions, bearing a necessity of Truth in their very Terms; That is not the Rule of Faith to which Attributes necessarily belonging to the Rule of Faith belong not; and, That is the Rule of Faith to which Properties belonging onely to such a Rule do belong. Hence I reject Scripture's Letter from being that Rule, and assert Tradition to be it. And this was enough perhaps for me to do if I onely minded opposition to those who adhere to Scripture's Letter for their Rule, in contradistinction and opposition to Tradition being such.

3. But, intending to avail my self and my Cause by the strength of Truth and Reason not the Weakness and Passion of others, I went forwards (having first shown it clearly Self-evident that Tradition was a most Certain Rule, if follow'd) endeavouring to demonstrate the Indefectiveness of Tradition, or that it was ever follow'd; and
this

this I attempted by those means. I took the allow'd Definition of Man (the Subject of the Effect I was to show,) which was to be a Rational Creature. I found the proper Agent or Efficient to work upon him as such to be Motives or Reasons; and, from the impossibility of any such Motives to make him prevaricate from openly deliver'd Faith, nay the necessity of seeing he must destroy his Credit without any possibility of compassing his End, I endeavour'd to conclude that Faith thus descended was never prevaricated from. Then, taking the way of demonstrating the same à posteriori, I took an Effect I conceiv'd Impossible to be introduc't into a Knowing Nature without the Existence of Tradition's ever-Indeficiency to ingraft it there, or rather to imbue Souls with it naturally, and as it were, ex traduce.

4. Seeing by this time that my Discourse, by stooping from my First Principles while I apply'd them to my business seem'd immerst in matter; and, by the mixture of many more and more papticular Terms than were in the meer Principle forcibly taken in, began to look with a contingent Face (though indeed I still perch't upon the specifical natures of Things, and so never flagg'd below the Sphere of Science) therefore to comfort the Readers understanding apt to grow turbid by my approach towards Practice, I consider'd Tradition practically and open'd the nature of it, by reflecting con-naturally how the Revolt from it which we call Heresy comes to be originiz'd. For the same rea-

son I compar'd the Human force of Christian Tradition with another vast Tradition meerly human; and then touching at some Divine Assistance, shew'd how the Authour of Nature had establish't the best piece of it, Man's Nature, by particular means exceeding her own native strength, to this Effect of preserving the descent of Christ's doctrine Unalterable and Uninterrupted; that is, I shew'd Tradition most Certain and most Indefectiue, and far beyond the establishment of any other piece of Natural Science whatsoever.

5. Lastly, observing that my Discourse by process (as the custom is in all Discourses, however evident, if not bound to syllogistical form) began to look dishevel'd, I added diverse Corollaries; In some of which I made many several ends of it meet in a closer frame; in others I advanc't forwards to show that the Churches Unity, Power to oblige and govern her Subjects as Faithful, and her Infallibility in the whole and several parts of her was founded in Tradition; nay that by means of Tradition She enjoys a wonderful Sacredness of Authority, being not onely Unexpugnable but also Unimpugnable without destroying all kinds of Certainty; that is, without highest nonsense in the Opposer. And hence I seat TRADITION on her Throne; demonstrating her the First, and consequently self-evident, Principle in affairs of this Nature; and therefore that the Knowledge of her Certainty is the First Principle in the Science of Controversy.

6. This

6. This tenour of my Discourse briefly reflected on, I beg of my intelligent Reader to regard it once more in the bulk, and he will see that I begin with Self evident Principles; That my Principles are antecedent to Authority, and so are competent means to judge Authorities by; that I studiously avoid wordish ambiguity, which Rhetorical Discourfers ly open to, holding rigorously to the notion or meaning of the words; that I lay but the meaning of two familiar words, Rule and Faith, for the basis of all my Discourse; that I endeavour to pursue my Principles by very obvious and immediate connexions; that all the way I attend heedfully to and build upon the Natures of the Things; which, in short, devalues to this, that it may be hop't (at least by my method) that there needs nothing but Time and Industry to frame and make up in rigorous demonstrative form, that sence which is here deliver'd in a way more sutable to the temper of the World and ease of my Readers; who may see Evidence in my Discourse, without being oblig'd to bend their brains to study my Book with that severity as they would do an Euclid.

7. When this is done, let my Reader reflect on all the Discourses concerning Faith made by any Protestant, and see how far they are short from (I will not say any likelihood of such performance, but) even an Attempt of Evidence. First Principles they lay none; & consequently Evidence of Deduction cannot be expected from them: for, wanting First Prin-

ciples, 'tis nonsense and folly to talk of deducing. Again, For want of such Principles, they want Certainty of any Text of Scripture to justify it against an Atheist or Deist. They want Self evident Principles to guide them in interpreting their Uncertain Letter, and so confute other Sects which differ from their Church; and the method they take to do it is evidently quite of another nature than Scientificall. They have nothing upon account of Living Teachers which ascertain Sense; so that you must find your Faith not build upon the sense of two or a few familiar words, but of an whole large Book; that is, on millions of words, and those too not onely unsent, but also very abstruse and mysterious. They suppose all which is antecedent to Faith, that is all Principles which are to induce Faith, and so make no Provision for the Grounds of Christianity against Heathens and Atheists: The Natures of Things they are so far from proceeding upon, that they not so much as minde or think of them, nor I doubt fancy or value that method when set before their eyes. Principles to weigh each Testimony by they lay none, and so quote at randome. Certainty they seek not, nor care for; for they quote the Fathers and Scripture as by themselves interpreted, and yet neither hold the Testimony of Fathers Infallible nor yet themselves in interpreting Scripture; yet plainest reason tells us, that unless the Fathers or Themselves were Infallible hic & nunc in this saying or interpretation, they were hic &

nunc Fallible ; that is, all built on that Testimony or Interpretation is Contingent and Uncertain: Tet of such Citations no better authoriz'd, clad perhaps in some fine words, the Books of their best Champions are made up. So that they are convinc't not to study Things, but Words ; that is, not to be Scholars or Knowers, but Empty Talkers ; and so the effect of their endeavours can never be satisfaction to an intelligent soul, but onely tickling the Ear or pleasing the Fancy.

9. As I have shown this Ungrounded proceeding of the Protestants by Principles, so I intend to do the same by Instances : but ere I go about this undertaking, I think fit to meet with an Objection obvious to many Readers. 'Tis this ; that, 'Tis strange all Catholicks do not take this way, it being so Conclusive, as well as I.

10. I answer, that all Truths being connected, 'tis evident each Truth, even for being such, is maintainable several wayes ; especially Supreme and very concerning ones : Amongst which wayes, some are sutable to some capacities, others to others. Wherefore Catholick Controvertists esteeming themselves Debtors both Sapientibus, or to those who judge of things per altissimas causas ; and Intipientibus, or those who do not so, nor fly higher than a prudential pitch : and the later of these being the Generality ; hereupon the Charity and Prudence of those learned Opposers of Dr. Pierce (and very many others) have thought fit to address to These by answering his Testimonies particularly ;

leaving me the way of Reason and Principles ; though in danger to receive much disadvantage by my imperfect delivery, and securer under the managery of their abler heads and pens. I declare therefore that I intend no confutation of any of those Authours, nor to share in the victory of those excellent Champions of Truth : It being perhaps needlest to the Generality (however very satisfactory to examining Wits) to confute that in Common which is already confuted by Retail. I write more against their Way than their Books. Yet, if any will be so charitable as to judge my short hints to bear the force of a solid Confutation, because they radically and fundamentally overthrow all their Arguments and very Method of arguing, if it be Truth's advantage, I shall give God thanks for it and be glad of it. But the main is, it imports not in maintaining Truth what others do or do not ; but, if it be shown that Catholick Principles (I mean the living voice of the Catholick Church, or Tradition, our Rule of Faith) can bear such a rigorous test of Reason, and appear more lustrous and bright by so severe a trial ; and, on the contrary, that the Principles of the Receders from her are so little solid, so volatil and meerly made up of Fancy, that they evaporate into ayr and even shrink into nothing when set in the mid-day beams of Truth, the Rules of Evidence ; I desire no higher an honour to the Catholick Church, nor deeper discredit to her Adversaries.

FIRST APPENDIX.

*Animadversions on the Groundlesness of
Dr Pierce's Sermon.*

I. **L** Looking about for Instances of Protestants Books most proper to be confuted by my former Doctrin, my thoughts pitcht naturally on Mr *Whitby's*, where he goes about to settle rationally his Rule of Faith, and on Mr *Stillingsfleet's*, where he opposes the way of Reason, and the Certainty of Tradition. But it seem'd convenient to take to task also some Adversary who insisted on Testimonies, and bring him to Grounds; because, in the way of Reason which brings Testimonies to Grounds, to confute one is in a manner to confute all. Dr *Hamond* seem'd proper; but his Book is now out of vogue, if it were ever in it; for I never heard past two or three persons speak of it: and, I am sure, the best Protestant Wits of our Nation never valued him, as a smart and efficacious Writer. Besides, the Notes I have lately given upon the Fathers Testimonies, leave little in him to be reply'd to, and my *Discourses* have left nothing at all. Amongst late Adversaries then, Dr *Dentons* folly seem'd so *ultra crepidam*, that it was not worth a serious thought; and 'tis wholly answer'd by declaring that he begins and grounds his whole Book on so knavish a Calumny, that, could the Universality

of Catholicks have the same Law against him, that a private Protestant, though the meanest in the Kingdome, might freely have, he would lose his Ears for Libelling. The *Dissuader* for his plausibleness (not for the strength of sence) seem'd to require a larger Answer than was suitable to the design of an Appendix. Dr *Pierce* was of highest vogue, and short ; but he was already so doubly overthrown by two Learned Opposers, that it seem'd unhandsome and ignoble to strike a man when he was down ; his Circumstances making him rather an Object of Pity than Victory. Yet his Pulpit-alarum to excite all *England* to persecute Catholicks was so full of malice, and so monstrously cry'd up, that I judg'd it above all others deserving to be made an Example of ungrounded Talk. Though I shall do it with that compassion as not so much to confute him, as by laying a few Notes as Admonitions to him, to open his Understanding and enable him to look into the force of his own Citations, and so to guide himself better the next time he goes about to quote Authours ; a point I doubt he as yet never thinks on. They may also give his Defender (now, as I hear, writing) some light to strengthen his Testimonies against us. I am sure they will tend to clear Truth, not to blunder it ; and so all ingenuous seekers of satisfaction will thank me for them. To begin then,

2. The whole scope of his Sermon exprest in the Title of it, *The Primitive Rule of Reformation*

tion, causes my first Admonition. For, since we both agree that the Primitive Faith is to be held to, and onely differ about the *Certain means* to come to know what that Faith was; we holding to Tradition and to Fathers and Councils (which are, take properly, parts of Tradition) as *Certain means* to know that Faith; The Protestants to private Interpretations of Scripture, and to Citations quoted on any fashion; The way to confute us Catholicks is to demonstrate the Certainty of the *way* they take to prove their Faith the same with the Primitive; otherwise, let them talk and write as long as they will, they are never the neerer their Conclusion. Now, if plain Experience tells us the *Smeſymnians* too preacht and writ against Episcopacy by quoting Fathers and Scripture, let Dr *Pierce* show us what his way of Talking has above theirs which gives it a virtue of ascertaining or perfectly settling the understanding; or confess theirs (and so his too) is infallible and frivolous. To *demonstrate* then against us, and so confute us, he ought rather have insisted on a *derivative* Rule, or a Rule able to derive down to them Christ's Faith with Certainty; so to make out their *present* knowledge, which alone can justify their present or late Action of *Reforming*; and not run afar off to a *Primitive* Rule or Faith, which is nothing to the Protestants, unless they can prove Certainly they follow it. When D. *Pierce* makes a Sermon at Court upon the Certainty of such a Rule,

Rule, we will all become Auditours, so he will promise to begin with First Principles, and bring Evidence of what he sayes: Till then let him take heed of bragging in print of *Demonstrations*, until he knows what the word means: that is, till he reflects how a Demonstration is a Proof which obliges the Understanding, and considers or studies wherein the Virtue by which it performs this, consists. Such bold and careless talk has cost his Credit dear already; and when it comes to be scann'd by Principles and Science, will leave it quite bankrupt.

3. We have seen the End and Scope of D. Pierce's Performance, which is, to over-leap all that concern'd him to prove, if he would conclude with Certainty against us: Now, *the usefullest part of his whole performance*, as he sayes in his Dedication, are his *Citations*, as being the *Evidence and Warrant of all the rest*; which therefore (if any thing) deserve to be consider'd. Their faults distinguish them into so many sorts.

Of the first sort are those which are impertinent to our (or indeed to any) purpose, but to make a noise or vapping show.

Of the second, those which are raw or unapplied, and onely say something in common which never comes home to the point.

Of the third, those which are levell'd blindly at none knows what, or at a question unstated; and so are shot at rovers.

Of the fourth, Those which impugn a Word for a Thing; or some Circumstance or Manner for the Substance.

Of the fifth, Negative Testimonies.

Of the sixth, A private Authours saying against the torrent of a contrary consent; which, of it self, is liable to innumerable contingencies of passion, mistake or ignorance; but, thus compar'd, signifies less than nothing. The like is to quote a Schoolman or two for a point which others freely contradict.

Of the seventh, those which are false, and signify not the thing they are expressly quoted for.

Of the eighth, those which labour of obscurity by an evidently ambiguous word.

Of the ninth, Sayings of those on his own Side.

Of the tenth, a few fragments of Scripture, sent by Fancy.

4. I intend not to muster up one by one all his Citations and then rank them under their respective Heads, the brevity of an Appendix not permitting it: But, I make this fair proffer to his Vindicater or himself, that if they please to pitch upon any Testimonie of his which falls not under some one (perhaps many) of these Faulty Common-places, I will yeild them all valid and conclusive, and make him publick satisfaction for the Injurie.

Having thus given my bond for the Truth of my charge, and under so great a penalie
upon

upon failure of being so, I have Title to free licence to suppose my charge good, (which will also appear shortly in common by my §. 9.) and accordingly to apply my reason to consider his Citations. I discourse then thus, and Note.

6. First, That Citations are of two sorts; the own alledges the Testifiers Knowledge by *Eye-sight* or *Infallible Sence*; the other his *Judgment* or *Opinion*. Now this later, in regard mens Judgments or Opinions depend on Reasons, is not properly that Authours Testimonie, nor he a *Witness* (who ought to proceed upon Evidence had by his Senses) but a *Schollar* or Relier on his Reasons; and, so, his expressing himself in the words found in such a Citation has no Authority farther than his Reason gives him; which Reason therefore and not his Saying ought to be alledg'd: In regard it was meerly by vertue of his Reason he *knew* this; and so the whole vertue of his Authority (which follows and goes paralel to *Knowledge*) consists in that Reason. None therefore are properly Testimonies, but those which relie on Sensitive Knowledge: and those are of Certain Authority, if the Sincerity of the Testator be unquestionable, and the conveyance of his sincerely-meant Knowledge to us be Evident; not otherwise.

2^{ly}. Note secondly, that, for the reason given, Citations from Adversaries, and Opinators signify nothing; also those whose words presumed
to

to express the Witnesses sense are Ambiguous, or otherwise-interpretable; or else their very Letter Uncertain; as all are, if the way of Tradition be held fallible.

Thus much in common of Citations as in themselves. Considering them next as made use of by Dr. *Pierce*, we find he relies on them as on his *Principles* to conclude against us, or as he (good man) unfortunately calls it, *Demonstrate*. Hence.

3^{ly}, They must not be *Negative*; for such can conclude nothing.

4^{ly}, They must not be false or evidently signifying another thing than they are produc't for, nor impertinent; for then they are in both cases quite besides the purpose.

5^{ly}, They must be express and home to the point; for, Principles must need nothing but Themselves (besides the Application) to infer the Conclusion pretended to spring from them.

9^{ly}, They must be void of ambiguity. For, Principles must be either *self-evident*, or at least *made evident*, ere they can deserve to be produc't or admitted such.

Lastly, Principles are *Sence*, not *Sounds* or *Characters*; and so their *Sence* ought to be Indisputable.

7. The first Note evacuates at once all his Citations from Authours that concern any point between us. For he brings no Certainty of any knowledge exprest to be built on Sence; that is

no Citation against us, which, in proper speech, deserves to be call'd a *Testimony*.

The second Note particularly invalidates those of the eighth and ninth sort.

The third, those of the fifth sort.

The fourth, those of the first and seventh.

The fifth, those of the five first sorts, and also those of the seventh.

The sixth, those of the second, third, and particularly the eighth.

The last Note enervates the tenth, and indeed almost all the rest. It being evident that our learned Controvertists give other Sences to those Citations than what Protestants assigne them, and maintain still those sences to/ better than theirs.

6c! 8. In a word, seeing all *Testimonial* Authority supposes *Knowledges* in the Authour, and all *Knowledge* is either from *Sense* (call'd *Experience*) or else from evident connexion of Terms (or *Reason*) and that this *later* knowledge is apt to make a *Master*, that is, one fit to convince and teach another rationally by *Intrinssecal Mediums* or to cause *Science* in him, and so is unfit for *Testifying*: and the *former* kind of Knowledge onely is fit to be an *Extrinssecal Medium* or apt to beget *Belief* of the Witnesses word (in regard any person, unacquainted otherwise with the Truth of the Point, knows by ordinary Experiences and common reason that mens *Understandings* may err, but their *Senses* rightly circum-

circumstanc't, cannot;) it follows that no Citation in proper speech deserves the name nor has the force or virtue of a TESTIMONY but those which are built on *Sense* or *Experience*. This weigh'd, reflecting on the main, I find not one Express *Testimony* against any point of our Faith, engaging Sense; that is, not one which merits the name of a Testimony or to be esteem'd a part of Tradition. That of *S. Austin* for communicating Infants has the true nature of a Testimony in it, and deserv'd a more elaborate Answer, had its Sence/being unquestionable and ^{been} the Words cited from the Father himself; but the Sence of it being Disputable (his Expositors explicating *S. Austin* by himself in another place not to mean *oral Manducation*, but *virtual* onely which is done by Baptism) and withall cited as a private Authours Sence concerning *S. Austin*, it falls under the 6th, and 8th. Head of faulty or inconclusive Citations, and so is already answer'd.

9. This is the upshot of that famous Sermon: And now I would gladly know what, in the Judgment of an intelligent person who examines things by Grounds, *Dr. Pierce* hath perform'd in this so highly extoll'd piece of his more than his dear Brother and fellow-champion against the Pope, Mr. HENRY WHISTLER? Onely he hath clad his little Nothings in some kind of mock-Rhetorick; which, like Fig-leaves, cover after a pitiful manner the Nakedness of his empty Discourse.

course. Yet, were even his Rhetorick examin'd by the substantial Rules of that Art, I doubt it would come off as ill as his Proofs. For 'tis obvious to observe that the beginning of his Sermon is just like a School-boy's Theme, and that his Style is far from even or spun on one thread; Instead of the Thunder & Lightning of strong and sententious Sense, astonishing and moving the Auditors reason by the advantageous smartness and Majesty of the Expression; he gives us a peal of Ordinance charg'd with ayr, a volly of thunder-thumping bombast, able to make a solid man's Reason nauseate; and this most inartificially plac'd at the very entrance of his Sermon, ¶ 2. Or else loud Pulpit-beating invectives and railings. He makes huge account of little quirking Observations out of Human Authors; which have no imaginable force or purpose but to make an ostentation of the uncouthness of his reading; the Gallantry of his third paragraph. For ingenious surprizes of Reason, erecting and taking the Understanding, we have wordish Quibbles, Quirks, and Paranomasias: and those most evidently (contrary to Art) studiously and industriously affected. His confident sayings without Proof make up half his Sermon; and his Ironies and Sarcasms are the sauce to make all this windy meat go down.

10. I will close with noting his excellent Faculty in quoting Scripture: To do which when the place is worth looking, as being brought to justify

stify some passage we are about, is grave and to some purpose; but, when no occasion or need invites, upon the naming any two or three words which hap to be in Scripture, to be still quoting and tricking the Margent with *Book, Chapter, Verse* and relating *Stars* or *little Letters*, is a very empty piece of Pageantry, and most filly Pedantical. Now, our Dr. cannot talk of *Faith*, but he must add (though most unsutably to his Reformers in *England*, to whom 'tis most notorious no body *deliver'd* it) *which was once deliver'd to the Saints*, and *Jude 3.* shall ascertain it. He cannot name the words, *which was from the beginning*, but the margent shall direct you to *Mat. 19. 8.* The two words *Spending* and *being Spent* oblige him to let you know where to finde them, *2 Cor. 12. 15.* At the very naming *Help* and *Allsufficient*, (two plain honest words, which might have been spoke whether Scripture had been or not) he cannot for his heart hold, but alledges you for it, *1 Cor. 1. 27.* And will needs (though indeed very needlessly to us) prove himself a *weak Instrument* by a plain Text, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* The obvious and common words *condemn'd out of their mouths*, must have a Star of the First magnitude to light you to a lesser one in the margent, and that to *Luke 19. 22.* And *David's* cutting of *Goliath's* Head with his own Sword, a story known undoubtedly by all that were like to read his Sermon, shall be secured from being

N

thought

thought a piece of a Romance or Knight-errantry by a punctual-Citation in the open margent, *1 Sam. 17. 51.* And, to omit diverse of the like pleasant strain, lest any Unbeliever should be so impious as to doubt that his *THEOPNEUST AHOLIAB* was an *Embroiderer*, you shall see it as plain as the nose on a man's face in an express Text, *Exod. 35. 30. 34.*

II. But why insist I thus on so poor a foolery in a Book I design'd for solid? or what advantage can I gain to my cause by so sleight an Animadversion? I answer, 'Tis my temper when I see an odd action done without reason, to trace it to its Original, and to search after its proper Cause: And, upon consideration, I finde none so proper for this Effect, as a certain kinde of humour of quoting in Dr. *Pierce* and others of his Brethren, so strongly possessing them, and even naturaliz'd into them, that, so they be quoting, they matter not much whether it be to purpose or not: This I have shewn in the whole bead-roll of his Citations (*the usefullest part* (as he sayes) *of his whole performance*) and that not one of those which he calls *Evidences*, is *conclusive*; that is, worth a straw, or to purpose: But, because every one will not be capable to see it in those Citations he brings for Proofs, I let them see it in those his late quotations of Scriptures: In which he so pittifully betraies his weak and vain humour of quoting to no imaginable end but to satisfy his customary habit or Fancy; and, as in his
Citati-

Citations, so in these, *imagins* the Apppplication of them to his Cause in stead of *showing* it, that I conceive no University-wit but will see in this carriage of his, that Dr. *Pierce's* head is not too *Scientifical*, nor himself a fit man to *demonstrate* against the *Papists*.

SECOND APPENDIX..

Animadversions.

On

Some Passages in Mr. Whitby.

I. **I** Beg pardon of my Reader for my late Mer-
riment and Children's play with airy bubbles and Feathers. Both Dr. *Pierce's* manner of writing and his Carriage towards Catholicks merited this kind of return. I hope the passages in Mr. *Whitby* I have design'd to answer, will give me occasion to speak more solidly: And, that they may do so, I will pick out those which aim at some point of Concernment. I have a particular respect for the person, and am sorry his growing hopefulness receiv'd a foil by his Book against Mr. *S.C.* and this through a threefold disadvantage; the badness of his Cause, the Patronage of Dr. *Pierce's* malice,

and his *impar congressus* with so learned an Antagonist.

2. Mr. Designe leads me to take notice especially of that passage, *p. 93. Sect. 4.* where he begins a discourse about the Sovereignty of Reason, and explicates (rather than proves it ought to be so) what is his Rule and Guide to Faith. Which, because it look't plausibly, yet was prudently neglected by Mr. *S.C.* who hearing of more Eminent Antagonists writing against him, judg'd it wisest to reserve himself to answer the Protestants second and best Thoughts in Them, in case they were found to deserve it; and, because on the other side the *Challenge* was made to *all the Romanists in the World*, and many passages in it light cross to the Grounds I had laid, I took leave to consider and examin it my way. In a great part of it; especially at the beginning the discourse is rightly made; but in other places he confounds Guide with Rule, Power with Motive, and, by straining a word in Mr. *S.C.* beyond its necessary signification, imposes on us a *false* Tenet which he mainly builds upon. So that I am forc't to begin my answer by putting down our *true* one, which gives Faith and Reason both their due. This done, his Superstructures on that Supposition will fall of themselves.

3. Our Tenet then is that *Faith* is the same with *Belief*, that *Belief* relies on *Authority*, and Divine Faith or Belief on the Divine Authority

as its *Motive*, and on the Church's as on the *Applier* of the other to my Understanding. At next, I hold that no Authority deserves Assent further than true Reason gives it to deserve; and, hence, the Divine Authority, being Essential Truth, deserves in true Reason, if possible, Infinitely-intense Assent or adhesion to its sayings from me; and the Church's Authority being found by my Reason to be *Certain*, it applies with Certainty (that is *closely*) the Divine Authority to my Understanding; and so obliges it absolutely to believe the Truths God has told, and to submit whatever reasons I may have against the Object reveal'd to this all-overpowering Authority of Essential Truth; This being the First Cause of all those things, whence my particular Reasons are taken. Nay, farther, hence it is that I adhere more heartily and firmly to a point of Faith than to any Conclusion of any Science whatever; because a more efficacious Cause equally closely apply'd is apt to produce a greater Effect, and no Cause is or can be in true reason comparable to that of the Divine Veracity in the point of causing Assent; which is closely apply'd by me to the Church's assurance. Hence my Faith is ever most Rational; because 'tis most rational to believe a point for which the Divine Veracity is engag'd, and perfectly rational to believe the Church assuring me that it *is* engag'd for such and such points: Nor yet is the Divine Authority or the Church (as Mr *Whitby* p. 96. very

mistakingly argues) *beholden to thy judgment of my private reason for my belief of her Infallibility*, but on, the contrary, my private reason is beholden to them for that Judgment; seeing I therefore come to have that Judgment because Those, as Objects, wrought upon my Apprehension and imprinted a conceit of them there as they were in themselves, and so oblig'd my Reason to conclude and my Judgment to hold them such as they were. This Rational Assent establishes my Faith against the assaults of any doubts from Human Reasons; resting assur'd that the same God who told me this, is the Maker of all things else, and hath writ all Created Truths in the Things he hath made; whence no created Truth can thwart my Faith unless he can contradict himself, which is impossible. Hence, if I have true Science I am certain to find no part of it opposit to my Faith; but, on the contrary, conformable to It, as being a Child of the same Parent, *Essential Truth*: If I have not true Science, I ought not to think so; nothing therefore but mine own overweening can make me miscarry.

4. Reason having thus play'd her part in bringing me to Faith, deserts me not yet while I act in it, nor I her: My Acts of Belief are still *rational*, because it was rational to believe at first, and my Grounds why I then believ'd rest still unchang'd, nay are unchangeable. But yet, Reason acts much differently now then
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formerly; Before I came at Faith she acted about her own Objects, Motives or Maxims, by which she scand the Authorities we spoke of: But, in Acts of Faith she hath nothing to do with the Objects of those Acts or Points of Faith; She is like a dimfighted man who us'd his Reason to finde a trusty Friend to lead him in the twi-light, and then reli'd on his guidance rationally without using his own Reason at all about the Way it self. To make this clearer we may distinguish two sences in the word *Reason*; one, as 'tis taken for that natural Faculty which constitutes *Man*; which Faculty never deserts or ought to desert us in any action that is *Manly* or virtuous. The other as 'tis taken for that Power wrought upon by motives under its own ken; in the same sence we call it *human Reason*; by which is not meant the natural Power unactuated or abstractedly, for then the word *human* were a Tautology; but Reason as conversant with such objects or inform'd by such knowledges as are commonly found within the sphere of our natural condition as *Men*, such as are those which beget Science: And this leaves us when we have once found the Authority now spoken of; the Objects of Faith, formally speaking, being out of her reach; nor is she (thus understood) the motive of our Assent to the verity of the *Point of Faith*, but *AUTHORITY* onely. Wherefore into *Authority* onely, *Faith* (as such) is resolv'd finally; though, if you go about to resolve the

Rationalness of assenting to the Authority it self, it will light into those Evident Reasons, which your natural power of reason, as yet uninformed by Faith but by motives or maxims within its own sphere, was capable to wield.

5. Reason therefore taken for my natural Power is my Eye or interiour *sight* ; as inform'd by common Principles or Maxims antecedent to Faith, my *Guide* to bring me to believe Authority ; and those motives or Maxims are the *Rules* to my Reason, by attending to which, she hath virtue or skill to set her own thoughts *right*, that is to *guide* me in my way to Faith : But, when I have once come to believe Authority, that is, come to Faith, not Reason but *Authority* is my Guide ; for I follow Authority and not my Reason in judging what is Faith, what not ; and, though the Light of that natural power never deserts me, yet Reason, as rul'd by her own natural maxims, is useless to me as a *Guide*, or those Maxims as a *Rule* ; for I apply neither of these to the mysteries of Faith to scan their verity or falsity by, but purely rely upon *Authority*, and *believe* them. Authority then is my Guide ; and in the *Infallibility* of that Authority, consists the power or virtue it has to guide me *right*, that is to regulate or *rule* me, as one of the Faithful, or as one who must have such Certain Grounds of my Assent, as I may securely build my Salvation on. This Authority then, as it is *Infallible*, is also my *Rule* in my *believing*, or the *Rule* of my *Faith*. This of my
Rule

Rule of Faith in Common, against Adversaries of Faith in common. But, with Protestants, who grant Christ to be God, and consequently his words or doctrine true, the only Rule and Guid we need, is to lead us into the Knowledge of what he said and assure it to us. We affirm then, that the *Catholick Church* is the *Guid* we follow, and her *Infallibility* (consisting in Tradition) our *Rule of Faith*. Hence all Catholicks profess her Doctrine uninterruptedly succeeding from the Apostles time, and so to continue to the end of the World; hence with one voice they lay claim to Christs gracious Assistance to her, in defending her from over-growing Errors against Faith, or Heresies; hence all profess to hear and follow her, and pledge undoubtingly even the security of their salvation, by relying on the Certainty of her Living Voice for their Tenets, and on her Disciplin for the Practice of their Faith. And though Scripture be sometimes made a partial Rule of Faith, yet this can be meant only *materially* not *formally*, that is, that some part of Faith is *signify'd* by Scripture's Letter, not that Scripture's Letter alone is sufficient *securely* to signify it to private understandings so as to beget that most strong & firm Assent found in Divine Faith; as is evident by this, that all hold no Scripture is of private Interpretation; and hold the living voice of the Church and her constant Practice are the best Interpreters of Scripture. Now, Faith being *Tenets* and *Sence*, that must be *formally*
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the Rule of Faith, which ascertains us of Christs Sence; not the material Characters which that Certain Interpreter we call the Church works upon, and by her Practical Tradition interprets.

6. 'Tis high time now to look back upon those of Dr *Pierce's* party, how justly they deal with us, and how mistakingly they discourse when they come to the Grounds of their Faith.

7. First, by the tenour of his discourse, Mr *Whitby* would seem to obtrude upon us a Tenet, which none but perfect mad-men could hold; namely, that we profess we have no reason why we believe the Church; which devolves to this, that we must profess we have as much reason to believe an old wife's dream as our Faith, since there can be no less reason than none at all. And hence he will needs assure the Reader, that therefore, the *Enthusiastick Sectaries are in part Romish Profelytes*, &c. And indeed upon so gross a calumny layd down for his principle and a sober Truth, what might he not conclude? with equal reason he might have inferr'd that all *Bedlam* were Catholicks, and that to turn *mad* were to turn a *Romanist*. But his carriage to put this upon Mr *S.C.* is *strangely* unjust; since he knows and hints it, that he writ a Book upon his declaring himself Catholick, entitled, *Motives of his Conversion*; does he think the word *Motives* does not signify *Reasons*, or, that to write an whole Book of Reasons why he adher'd
to

to the Catholick Church signifies that he renounc't all reason why he believ'd her?

8. Next, as for his own Tenet, he layes this for his Ground, that, *Reason alone is judge in all cases.* I will propose him one case, and 'tis the Existence of a *Trinity.* To work now with your Reason about this object, and see how you evince it. I doubt your best reasons will crack ere you make all ends meet. But, you mean you must have Reason to *believe* it; I conceive (speaking properly) you should rather say you must have Reason to believe the *Authority*, and *Authority* to believe It; for *Belief* is as properly relative to *Authority* as *Science* is to an Act of true Reason or *Evidence.* Whence 'tis as incongruous to say I must have Reason to believe such a Point, as to say I know such a point Scientifically by Authority. Again, for God's love who ever deny'd they ought to have reason to believe the Churches Authority; Is any thing more frequent in our Controvertists and Divines treating of the Ground of Faith than large Discourses concerning Motives of Credibility?

9. Thirdly, he sayes that disputing with Romanists whether Scripture be the sole Rule, he means 'tis so *limitedly*, that is between *Christians*, who have already acknowledged Scripture a Rule of Faith. By which I see Mr *Whitby* guides himself by *sounds*, though he must needs know (if he knows any thing of Catholick Tenets) our

Sence

sence is quite different. I beseech you, Sir, deal fairly with us: Is not that, speaking formally and properly, *the Rule of Faith* which gives us Christs *sence*; and does not that give us the *Sence* of Scripture which regulates us in the Interpretation of it? Did ever Catholick then hold that Scripture interpreted on any fashion, much less on your fashion by private Judgments or reasons regulated by Grammatical skill, Criticisms and such like verbal knowledges, is a Rule of Faith; nay do not we constantly abhor this way as the Source of Heresy? Take us right then we hold not Scripture's Letter alone a Rule, but Scripture interpreted by the *Church*; that is, indeed, the Church formally speaking; and so you see you mistake our Principle. Yet upon our joynt-agreement in this your Discourse against us proceeds. Retrive it then, you see your Error. Again, you tell us Scripture is your *new Rule*, but forget quite in your discourse to tell us that your Reason assures you Scripture is to be the onely Rule, or why it should be so; since (besides what I have demonstrated to the Contrary in my former Discourses) 'tis evident Christian Religion had descended many steps ere the Scripture's parts were much scatter'd, much less the Whole collected; and no less clear that, that can never be a Rule or Way to Faith, which many follow yet their thoughts straggle into many several Judgments; not in indifferent points, but in that of the *Trinity* amongst

amongst the rest, as your self profess of the *Socinian*, that *he rejects not the Trinity in the first place, because it seems a contradiction, but because 'tis not clearly discover'd in Scripture*; by which you see he adheres firm to your Rule, and so ought to be acknowledg'd one of your Church; since, though he hap to differ in some points, yet he holds fast the Rule common to both; which is the substantiallest Principle of a Church as such, being the Ground of all Faith. And, indeed, your Kindness to him here, and your tender care not to displease him, shows you have a true brotherly affection for him. Though I fear he will con you small thanks for making his Principle run thus, *That which is not clearly reveal'd in Scripture and is contradictory to reason is not to be believ'd*; which seems to imply, that were it clear in Scripture, yet contradictory to Reason, then he would notwithstanding believe it. An over-strain of Piety no *Socinian* was ever guilty of, and I can assure you no learned Catholick Divine I ever heard of ever made such an Act of Faith. But 'tis another case if it onely *seems contradictory*, and is not judg'd by him to be evidently such; for then there is room left in his mind for the contrary Assent of of Faith to settle there.

10. You say *you prescribe not the doctrine imputed to the Socinians, because it makes Reason the Judge of Faith, but the Rule of Faith*. Pray take pains to consider what you say. He that
judges

judges must have some Principles in his head by which he is *regulated* in making such a Judgment; those Principles then must be his *Rule* in that Action; and, if that Judgment be an adhesion to a point of Faith, those Principles are his **RULE OF FAITH**. Examine now well your own thoughts, whether your Principles, by which you find out certainly by interpreting Scripture this is God's sense or a point of Faith, be not Maxims of your *human* Reason. I am sure in disputes against us you prove and defend your Faith by such Skills; as Languages, History and other Knowledges got by Human Learning; and consequently hold it your selves upon the tenour of those Skills, which therefore are your Rule of Faith, and not upon the bare Letter. You, I know, will deny it. But I beg your second thoughts to reflect that a *Rule* to such an Effect is the immediate Knowledge to the Power as conversant about that Effect; and that, if another intervene, it regulates the former; which thereupon becomes the thing *ruled*, not the *Rule*. Do then these skills clear the Letter of Scripture, that is, make known God's Sense to you? If so, since their Immediate effect is to *clear it*, 'tis impossible to deny but they are at least part of the Revelation; for *revealing* is *clearing*, and God's Sense was not *clearly revealed* but by those means, that is by *human maxims*; and so they are at least the *more formal* part of your Rule of Faith. Again, I ask
might

might you not have mistaken the true Sence without those Human Maxims? If so, then They, and not Scripture's Letter, were your Rule. If not, then onely common Sence is requisite to understand clearly what's *reveal'd* in Scripture; and then, either your Brother Socinian or you want Common Sence, which I think you'l scarce say.

II. But, will you see you still hold *Reason* your Rule, notwithstanding you cry up the Written word? Find you not there expressly that God has hands, feet, nostrils and passions like ours, and this in clear terms? Why is it not then a point of Faith? You will not answer sure it is against Maxims of Reason; you renounc't them formerly (p. 94.) when you had found out your *new Rule* and onely allow'd your Reason power to judge, if a point were sufficiently reveal'd, that *it is most rational to captivate it self, though it seem to contradict or thwart Reason*. Now this is *sufficiently reveal'd* being plainly writ in your Rule of Faith, and the direct Letter of Scripture; why will you not then *captivate your Reason* and believe it? I see you do but complement with God's *incomprehensible Knowledge* in speaking so highly of it and so humbly of your own *shallow Intellect*: Will you deny a point of Faith so plainly reveal'd for your own *capricho* or conceit? Perhaps you'l say 'tis not clearly *reveal'd* because the contrary is plain in Scripture too. I ask, is it *as plain*? if not, it cannot over-

overthrow the title of this to be a point of Faith: If *as plain*, why should you not believe both? Be valiant, Sir, and believe a contradiction it being *clearly reveal'd*. Perhaps it *seems* but such, and then your own profession. p. 94. obliges you to admit it: You that can acknowledge an *Infinit extension of space* (when you say *all the world besides* does so too, sure you thought all the World was in your Fancy) may also hold *Materia ab eterno*, and that it is onely a part of God's Nature, as (if I mistake not) *Jacob Bemen* does; and then *secundum hanc partem* or *illam* will do the work, and gives a true sence to both sides of the contradiction. You should do any thing which could by any means make it seem possible, rather than question a *plain Divine Revelation*: Nay, perhaps you do not think you can demonstrate the contrary to the solution I have helpt you out with, at least that your Demonstration is but a *seeming* one; and then I challenge your candour to own your sayings, and demand why you are not bound to use this shift and a thousand others rather than violate your avow'd Rule of Faith, and deny and hold against the clear Letter of Scripture. If you alledge you have perfect Science of the contrary by Metaphysicks; then, though I expect not this from you, your Science rules your Rule of Faith; glossing or rather violently wresting the *plain Letter*, and so is so absolutely your Rule of Faith that it controls and even baffles the

the other though *clearly revealing*: Or, if to be in exprefs terms in Scripture be not to be *clearly reveal'd*, I would fain know what thofe words *clearly revealed in Scripture* fignifie.

12. Perhaps you'll fay, that notwithstanding your *new Rule*, Reason muft be your *GUID* ftill even in Faith, though not your *Rule*. But I ask, if your Reason muft guide you fometimes fo as to deny the clear Letter of Scripture, fince a Guid in any thing muft be regulated by fome Knowledges in that Affair, By what Principles or Knowledges Reason is to regulate it felf while it guides you in that particular now in queftion? By Principles of Faith? How can that be in your Grounds antecedently to the known Sence of the Scripture? By Principles of *Human Science*? Then thofe Principles of Human Science give you the Certain Sence of the Written Word when it felf is infufficient, and therefore are ftill truly your Rule of Faith; and fo you are forc't to fly back for refuge to the old Rule, *Human Reason*, which you feemingly renounc't when you had found your *new Rule* of the Scripture. 'Tis Evident then that fome Maxims of your Reason are your Rule and not Scripture's Letter. And this is what we reprehend in the Socinian and you too; that, chufing a wrong Rule of Faith fo to avoid the Church, you both gloss it as ftems beft to your Reason regulating her felf by her own, thofe fallible, Maxims. They by certain acute and ingenious Sophiftries proper

to themselves, you by the more school-boy way of Grammar and Dictionary Learning; and so both of you make your *Rule* the *thing Ruled*. Nor think to retort any part of this Discourse upon our Rule of Faith; For, this being the living voice of the Church, delivers us a Determinate Sence of the Points we are to profess, whereas Yours needs skills and helps of studious Reason to tell you what it would say; Ours is alive, and in the Breast and Actions of the Faithful; yours is dead characters, waxen-natur'd, and pliable to the *Dedalean* fancies of the ingenious molders of new Opinions; and so, alone, can satisfie no man as you handle it.

13. No wonder now, if, having no certainer a Ground or Rule of Faith for her self, your Church is shamefac't of obliging others to believe her: Man's nature could scarce own or permit so irrational a tyranny. Yet whether she does or does not, we must not know from your words; which run so backwards and forwards, that none can tell which is the true face of the *Janus*. First p. 99. you seem to deny it stoutly from the carriage of your Convocations and Bishops, and from your own Tenets: Yet afterwards you seem to grant they do *require a positive assent* sometimes, and justifie them as not doing it *upon pretence of any Infallibility, but because the thing determin'd is so Evident in Scripture, that all denying it must be wilful*. A rare Discourse, and worthy a deep consideration! Pray who must be Judge it is so Evident

Evident in Scripture as to render the Dissenters guilty of flat Wilfulness? The Bishops, or your Church? Nothing less: In the beginning of this Discourse (p. 93.) you plainly deny'd them to be Judges of Faith. Now in your sence to be *clearly reveal'd* or evident in Scripture, and to be of Faith is all one; so that they must not be Judges of *what is evident in Scripture*, lest by necessary consequence they become Judges of Faith; and yet without having power to Judge what is evident in Scripture, they must have power to *require assent to Points as evident in Scripture*; nay and *punish* the dissenters too: For 'tis a madness for Governours to *require* any thing of their Subjects, without having Rewards and Punishments in their hands to make what they require be duely observ'd. Nay p. 93. you absolutely refus'd to admit them as *Guides of your Faith*. A moderate word and less than to be a Judge! Which signifies they may have *power to require our Assents* in matters in which they have *no power to guide us*; that is, they may have power to *require us to go wrong* for any thing we or they know. An excellent honour for the Church of *England*, that her Champions profess in Print her Supreme Pastors have no power at all to guide their Flock in their Faith, or to it when they are out of it! Again, I would ask whether the *Trinity* be not *Evident in Scripture*, and the Socinians *wisful* for denying it? Why are they then so kindly dealt with? Or what could be reply'd to a *Socinian*,

answering, when his Assent to the Trinity were required, that he humbly submitted to Scripture, that he us'd all the means he could, but discover'd it not so evident there; and thereupon complain'd that you obtruded upon his equally-learned party your own conceit or opinion for Scripture-Evidences? What therefore you alledge here, as in your Churches behalf, that she *requires not a positive assent upon pretence of any Infallibility*, more condemns Her; seeing 'tis most irrational one should require an assent to any point or proposition whatever, as evident in Scripture, without Infallible Certainty (at least imagin'd and pretended) that it is thus evident there; for, should it happen to be otherwise, how ridiculous were his Authority, how damnable and pernicious his Tyrannie to oblige men to the hazard of falshoods in matters of Faith, that is in matters belonging to his eternal Salvation; and in the mean time profess himself Ignorant whether they be false or no.

14. Now our Church goes another way; which ere I declare, I would let your party see, that Interior Assent may be required by Governours lawfully and rationally, which your Principles can never make sence of. Suppose a thousand witnesses from several places each of them held alwayes men of good consciences should swear in open Court that they had seen such and such actions done by such a man, or that they had seen, spoken or convers'd with such a person, were not
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he *mad* that is a renouncer of Reason or Man's Nature who should not believe them. You see then these Witnesses have power to propose such an Object as can *oblige to Belief*? You see the Dissenters are Irrational, that their act of dissenting springs from some Passion or Vice, and Vice is punishable; and so is the Effects of that Dissent, if it be in such a matter as is highly pernicious to Mankind's best concerns. Now our Church makes account she is able to propose an Authority incomparably more ample than the Attestation now spoken of, for the true Descent of her Faith; and judges such a proposal, founded on the eye-sight of all those Witnesses, to be able to oblige to inferiour Assent in such a degree as to render them most highly wilful, vicious and irrational who should disbelieve it; hence (the crime intrenching upon the order to mankind's Salvation, the highest concern imaginable,) both to edify those Dissenters by correcting their vice, and the circumstant Faithful, by breeding a conceit in them, through the punishment of the others, of the sacredness of Faith and its Rule, and the hainousness of Pride of understanding the ready way to all Heresies, they may nay ought punish their Interiour Dissent: Not out of an height of Authority without motives, as Mr. *Whitby* conceits, but because that Authority is her self such a motive to Belief, that onely irrational vicious and wilful-blind persons can recede from it by Disbelief:

And hence our Churches procedure is rational, natural, sweet and charitable, tending to amend an enormity of Will not bred from a rationally- but passionately-dissatisfy'd Understanding. Nay, Mr. *Whitby's* discourse justifies Our Churches procedure; who seems to allow his Church a power to require a positive Assent, when the case comes to be such that the denier of it must needs be held *wilful*; and our Church neither sayes nor acts otherwise.

15. By this Discourse I would not have Mr *Whitby* imagin that I am about proving our Churches Infallibility in this place; but onely showing that, holding She can evidence her Authority; She goes rationally to work and consonantly to her self in requiring Assent to her Proposals; whereas Theirs, confessing her self fallible even in interpreting Scripture, upon which all, both her *Faith*, and *Authority* as a Church, depends, were self-condemn'd, irrational and tyrannical if She should go about to require any such Interior Assent. Now, though he in big words denies this to be her carriage, asking *when did they* (meaning Bishops, Convocations or Parliaments) *challenge any power over our minds and Consciences*, and alledges the consent of their Divines for it, yet I wonder what he thinks of the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, made by a Protestant Parliament; is there no obligation there to *hold* any thing? Yes, as strong as Oath can tye it. And, which is worse, 'tis more Irrational

nal to go about to bind Our Assents who are not of their Church, then to bind their own Subjects. This in practice is perform'd towards all ; but so imprincipled a procedure that their Church waves it when it comes to a rational scanning in a Dispute and Controversy, acknowledging so their want of Grounds to make it good. Which shows that the Authority of their Church sprang from the Parliament or Secular State, in regard She professes her self very heartily content with external Obedience, let the Interiour Assent goes where it will ; most unlike the Church settled by the Wisdome of the Eternal Father, and constituted *the Pillar and Ground of Truth* ; who provided in the first place for the Churches Power to *hold* us to the same *Tenets* (which are the Principles of our Actions) knowing that, unless the Root of Faith be found, the Actions, its branches, must needs be rotten and unconscientious ; and, that no Congregation could long hold together, nor indeed longer than the plain force of the Secular Sword aw'd them, unless by power to *evidence* its Authority it had power to *oblige* men's Understandings connaturally to an Unity in the same Faith ; which done, all else would follow. And hence we may see confessedly in the Protestant Principles the reason of their present and past distractions, and divine of the future ; for, men's Fancies being naturally various, and no power in her to keep them in an Union, they

must needs ramble into multitudes of dissenting Sects ; which to strive to unite into one were to force both Nature and Conscience too. *Nature*, in striving to unite their Understandings in Faith, without offering them *Evidence of Authority* ; *Conscience*, in binding them to *Act* as Protestants do, whereas they are ready to stake their Salvation upon it that their best reasons working upon the very Rule of Faith Protestants recommend, obliges them to the contrary, and that to force them to *act with Them* is to force them to *sin* ; So that the Protestants at once profess they will not or cannot oblige their *Understandings*, and yet at the same time contend by force to oblige their *Wills*, without, nay against their Understandings.

16. In a word, let Protestants write, talk & quote words as long as they will, Plainest Common Sense tells them and every man who considers it, that unless they settle some *Undisputable Method* of arriving at Christ's Sense or Faith, that is, some *self evident* (and so *all-obliging*) *Rule of Faith*, the Protestant Church can never hope for Power to reduce their Dissenters, nor to hold together or govern efficaciously their own Subjects ; that is, they can never hope for Unity within themselves ; nor, lastly, Union with them that have it, and charitably endeavour they may have it too.

THIRD APPENDIX.

Animadversions

On

Some Passages in Mr. Stillingfleet.

I. **T**He loud Fame of Mr. *Stillingfleet's* Book preventing its Publication, and withall the report of his good parts coming from divers Judicious Persons, bred in me a great Impatience to see something of his other Writings, that so I might have more solid Ground to build my Expectation on than common rumour or commendation of acquaintances. A Protestant Friend shew'd me a little Treatise of his concerning Excommunication. I perus'd the beginning of it, and immediately told him Mr. *Stillingfleet* was a very ingenious person, and writ the best I ever yet saw any Protestant : For he settled first his notion of the true nature of the Thing, and thence attempted by intrinsical *mediums* to draw immediate Consequences, which shew'd that his head lay right for Science. But, withal, I assur'd my Friend 'twas impossible he could write against us, and take that method ; the nature of his Cause not enduring so severe a Test. His Book coming forth, and bearing in its Title *a Rational Account of the Grounds of Protestant*

Protestant Religion, my Expectation was more erected; and, till my self could get leasure to peruse it, I told diverse both Catholicks and Protestants that they might expect from Mr. *Stillingfleet's* Wit the most that could be said either for the later or against the former. But, coming to over-look cursorily his *Infallibility of Tradition*, Part 1. Cap. 6. and *The Protestants Way of resolving Faith*, Cap. 7. I had quite lost Mr. *Stillingfleet*; and, instead of him, had found a Dr. *Hammond*, Dr. *Pierce*, or a *Disuader*; who talk not out of Nature or Things, but Words and Imagination. I plainly discover'd there was not one proposition in those two Discourses which could be a solid Ground for a rational understanding (that would be true to it self) to settle and rely on; and was desirous to shew it, had it not been uncivil to put my sickle into another man's harvest, and crop the victory due to another's Learning and Industry: Victory, I say; For he that defends his Cause no better, in effect yields it lost. Yet I beg leave of the judicious Authour of *Labyrinthus Cantuariensis* to maintain one Breach where I find my self more directly assaulted; Oral Tradition being the Post I have taken upon me to explicate further & defend, because I conceive it the solid Ground on which the Church, or all Catholicks both Learned and Unlearned, rely as *Faithful*: however some School-men, *abounding in their own Sence*, ground also their Explication of
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the Churches Infallibility on something besides.

2. Mr *Stillingfleet* then Part 3. Chap. 5. §. 4, & 5. sets himself to oppose *Oral Tradition*, whose Infallibility he opposes to *Doctrinal Infallibility in Pope or Councils*. Where, if by *Doctrinal Infallibility*, he means that which they have as Doctors or Schollers, he may reflect that no Catholick makes such an Infallibility *proper* to the Church or Church-Governours, as such; however it may be sometimes *necessary* to proceed upon it in some signal occasions. Now, take away this Infallibility, there is none left but the Infallibility of *Tradition*, perform'd by Testifying: It being Evident that we have but two wayes of ordinary Knowledge; by Acts of our Soul, or Operations on our Body; that is, by *Reason* and *Experience*; the former of which belongs to Speculators or Doctors; the second to *Deliverers* of what was receiv'd, or, to Testifiers. Whence M. *Stillingfleet* may see he stumbles at the very threshold by counterposing *Doctrinal Infallibility* to *Traditionary*; since that which we call *Ecclesia docens* professes constantly to ground her self on Tradition; witness the Council of *Trent* in every Session where she defines Faith.

3. No wonder then, if grounding on this mistake, Mr *Stillingfleet* declares himself unsatisfi'd. He asks therefore *whether he is bound to believe what the present Church delivers to be Infallible?* I understand him not: Had he instead of the word *Infallible*, put *receiv'd as deliver'd ever*, or *Infallibly*

libly true, I had ; for Fallibility and Infallibility belong to the Knowing Power or the Persons that have it, not to the Object ; The Object being neither *deceiv'd* nor *not deceiv'd*, but *we*. Well, but suppose he means by it *deliver'd ever*, or (which is equivalent) *certainly true*, for what came from Christ must be so ; In that case we answer Affirmatively : He asks again, *on what account* is he *bound to believe it* ? And he makes our Answer to be, *Because the present Church cannot be deceiv'd in what the Church of the former Age believ'd, nor That in the precedent, and so up till Christ*. This is indeed part of our Answer : The other part is, that *the Church in no Age could conspire against her Knowledge to deceive that Age immediately following in matter of Fact evident in a manner to the whole World*. Upon this, he falls into two new Demands which take up this whole paragraph.

4. The first is, *how we can assure him the present Church obliges him to believe nothing but onely what and so far as it receiv'd from the former Church* ? I answer, by her manifest Practice ; never refusing Communion to any man that could approve himself to believe all the former Age did. I could here distinguish the word *Believe*, but I refer it till I come to speak of *de fide*. He proceeds. *What Evidence can you bring to convince me both that the Church always observ'd this Rule, and could never be deceiv'd in it* ? For the later, I hope I need bring no greater Evidence than this, that

that men in all Ages had Eyes, Ears, and other Senses, also common Reason, and as much memory as to remember their own names and frequently-inculcated Actions. If you disprove this, I doubt we have lost *mankind*, the subject we are speaking of. And, till you disprove it, neither I nor any man in his wits can doubt that this Rule depending on Testifying, that is *sence* or Experience, can possibly permit men to be *deceivable*. The former part I shall speak to when I come to show the Obligation not to vary from Faith. His Scruple brings hence, that he *sees the Roman Church asserts things to be de fide in one age which were not in another*, &c. that *this is the common Doctrin* and the *deniers* ill-look't on. I beg leave to distinguish the words *de fide*; which may either mean *Christian Faith* or *Points of Faith taught by Christ*; and then you see 'tis a contradiction to say they can be in one Age and not in another; for what Christ has taught he *has* taught, and the preteritness of the Thing has so fixt its Existence to its proper time, that 'tis not now obnoxious to variation; *Quod factum est infectum fieri non potest*. Or, *de fide* may mean *obligatory to be believ'd*. In this later sence none (I think) denies things may be *de fide* in one Age, and not in another; in the former sence none holds it. What's now become of your difficulty? I believe you are in some wonderment, and think I clude it rather than answer it: I shall endeavour to unperplex you.

5. Christianity aym's not to make us *Beasts*, but more perfectly *Men*; and the perfection of our Manhood consists in using our Reasons. Since then *natural* Consequences are apt to spring from *natural* Principles by the operation of Reason, and we cannot but think that the Consequences apt to flow from *Supernatural* Principles or Points of Faith deliver'd down from Christ (onely which are *de fide* in the former Sence) are of incomparably greater Excellency than Natural Truth, it follows that Christianity or Christian Faith is so far from hindring the Faithful from deducing out of them, that both out of their nature as Supream Truths or Principles, and out of their high Excellency they invite and prompt most strongly to it. Now, these Points deduc't out of Principles of Faith are of two sorts; The former those which need no more but Common Sence or the ordinary natural Light of Reason to discover their arising thence, nor any piece of Skill or Science to infer them, but are seen by the bare Principle of Faith, or rather *in* it; being indeed but a Branch or Part of that Principle. The later are those which need, besides, the Maxims of some Science got by Speculation to infer them. An Example of the former sort is that against the *Monothe-Lites* of Christ's having an *Human Will*; for, common Experience tells the most vulgar that every Man has a Principle in him impelling him to Act, which we agree to call a *Will*. Such like-
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wise are all Propositions of this Nature which the Church uses upon occasion of some emergent Heresie to explain her self and put the point of Faith out of danger of being *equivocated*. Examples of the later sort are Theological Conclusions ; in which a Natural Truth is one of the Premises, joyning with the Supernatural one to infer them. To omit this, as little to our purpose at present ; Of the former sort the Church is necessitated to make use upon occasion ; that is ; when any Heretick questions Those, and *eâdem operâ* the whole point of Faith it self of which they were a part. Upon occasion I say ; For what concern'd its the Faithful or who ever heard much noise of this Proposition, *Christ has two Wills*, thus singled out and exprest apart, till the *Monothelite* granting him but one, forc't the Church, that she might preserve the main Tenet of Christ's having two Natures, or being God and Man, to maintain, publish and define that other.

6. To apply this then ; since none can have Obligation to *believe* what they have not obligation to *think of*, and, that in some Age the *Generality* of the Faithful have no Occasion nor consequently Obligation to minde, reflect or *think on* those Propositions involv'd in the main stock of Faith, and truly parts of it, that is indeed *It* ; It follows that a Thing may be *de fide* or obligatory to be believ'd in one Age and not in another. Perhaps Mr. *Stillingsfleet* may ask

ask how the Church can have Power to oblige the Generality to Belief of such a point. I answer, she obliges them to believe the main Point of Faith by virtue of Tradition's being a Self-evident Rule, and these Imply'd Points by virtue of their being self-evidently-connected with those main and perpetually-us'd Points, so that the vulgar can be rationally and connaturally made capable of this their Obligation. Whence the Government of our Church is still justify'd to be sweet and according to right Nature, and yet forcible and Efficacious to hold her Subjects in a strict Union. Not to mention how these Points also descended by a kind of Tradition; for I doubt not but the Apostles had occasion in explaining Faith to speak of These; however the no Necessity brought them not so much into play, but left them unreflected on by the Generality.

7. But to return to Mr. *Stillingsfleet*, who acts here like a Politician and would *conquer* us by first *dividing* us, and making odious Comparisons between two parties of Divines. But he may please to reflect how we all hold firmly the same divinely-constituted Church-Government, and the same self-evident Rule of Faith to give our understandings the same principles as Christians, and so our wills the same Actions: And those are firmly rooted in all our hearts to have been recommended to us by the Wisdom of the Eternal Father: Whence 'tis Impossible for all
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the Wit of Man or even Malice of Hell to disunite us as we are *Faithful*: As *private Discourfers*, our different Natures and Circumstances must needs distinguish us. Every one *believes* the same; but, coming to *explicate* this Belief, they vary according to the several degrees of perfection in their understanding Powers. And yet Mr. *Stillfleet* is not aware how little we differ even as Divines: For, though some Speculators attribute to the Church a power of *defining* thing *not held before*, yet few will say she has *New Revelations*, or *New Articles* of Faith, & those onely some *Lawyers* who talk beyond their Profession; no *Divines* that I know of; and none, that Christ was not a perfect Law-giver; which are necessary Consequents (or rather in a manner Identical) to the other. And, when it comes to the point, those men explain themselves that all was *deliver'd Faith*, either *Explicitly* or *Implicitly*; which I have shown to bear a very good Sence, in my Explication of *de fide*. He tells us Popes and Councils challenge a power to make things *de fide* in one Age which was not in another: he speaks onely in common and proves it not: Had he brought Instances, it might have been better clear'd. In the mean time I have shown him how, take them right, this is both perfectly innocent and unavoidably necessary to a Church. What would avail him is, if a Pope and Council should define a *new Thing*, and declare they ground themselves on *new Lights*, as did their first Reformers in *England*: But he will

finde no such fopperies in Faith-definitions made by the Catholick Church. He tells us that this is *the common Doctrin maintain'd*; By which I perceive he is at an end of his Argument against our *Church*; there being no evidenter signe of it, than to leave off assaulting Her; confound her with the *Schools*, or some private Opinaters, and then carp at these mens Tenets. Whereas Mr. *Stillingfleet* wants not Wit to know, that no sober Catholick holds *Human deductions* the *Rule of our Faith*, Schoolmen *Definers* of it, nor the *Schools* the *Tribunal* whence to propose it authoritatively and obligingly to the Generality of the Faithful; much less a *few Divines*, which are far from reaching the Authority of the *Schools*. Yet how much of his Book would need no Answer, were this Impertinent Topick laid aside? But well; Let *Schools* and *Church* be all one, that is, let every Master of divinity be a Bishop, what means he to conclude from the words *common Doctrin*? Does he make account every School-Doctrin must be *equally* in vogue, or that an Opinion's being *Common* defines it Faith and condemns the other for Heretical. Where's his Reason? The direct contrary follows from its being *Common*; and, that 'tis not Faith which others, though not so many, may contradict; and he is but meanly vers't in our *Schools* if he sees not very many publikely maintain that there are no new Revelations without dreading *Excommunication*, or being held *Heretical* and *seditions*: So
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they grant the Church power (as they ought) by new Propositions and new but expressive Words, (yet, both the same in *sence* and so not new in *substance*) to meet with the new devis'd Cavils of Innovators,

8. Yet all this while Mr. *Stillingfleet* cannot see how to *satisfie himself of the Sence of our Church as to this particular*. Nor ever will, while he wilfully looks the wrong way, that is, towards some particular Schoolmen or Divines, not towards the Universality of the Faithful or Church. What need he counterfeit this puzzle? Did he never hear of such a thing as the Council of *Trent*? Or is it so hard to find it? Again, does not he know all the Catholick Church allows more a thousand times to It than to all the Schoolmen in the World? Yes very well; How comes it then that he runs to some Schoolmen, and neglects the Church speaking in her Representative? Because he may finde there a clear Solution of his doubt, by the constant procedure of that most grave Synod in its definitions: where he will hear of no such Toyes as *New Revelations*, but directly the contrary; Every Session where Faith was defin'd professing to build on *Tradition, Teaching and Preaching*; that is, *Oral Tradition*; ever, *alwayes, from the beginning, &c.* that is not-*new*, but the *old-and-ever-Faith*. If you would combat our Church, here you have her; fall to work: But you find some Schoolmen *opining* also Infallibility in some other means besides Tradition, and

judging this Tenet easilier confuted, you level your blowes at it, because the other is out of your reach; and would make this Tenet the Sence of the Catholick Church, and so seem to oppose the Church her self. You would disgrace this Way of Tradition as maintain'd but by a few, and those blemisht persons. How far are you wide of the Truth? 'Tis the way every Catholick in the whole Church, none excepted, holds and follows. For my part, I disavow the maintaining any Point or affecting any way which is not assented to by all; and this, not as Opinion, but deeply rooted in their hearts as Infallibly Certain. Schoolmen at Liberty question Personal Infallibility of the Pope, some grant it not to him and his *Roman* Clergy, some question that of a Provincial Synod; nay some, whose Books are extant and yet uncensur'd, maintain even a General Council may possibly err; but not one I have heard or read of affirms that *Tradition*, or the Living voice of the Church Essential, could err; For in doing so, he call'd all his Faith in question, and so ceast to be a Christian.

9. This then being held by *all*; held *firmly*; and that it is *absolutely Infallible* so that in no case it can err, the others only by *some*, & *faintly* in comparison (as appears by the Faithful's permitting them to be question'd) nay, not held at all Infallible but upon Supposal of certain Conditions to be observ'd, in which also Divines differ, *Mr. Stillingfleet* and other Protestant Writers may see what

what they have to do if they will candidly impugn the Catholick Church, and not trifle away time in wrangling with some private Opinators. I have set them a fair mark in my Discourses, if they will speak to the Point; and the end of my Preface has told them how to do it. If they overthrow this, all the other Infallibilities now spoken of will fall with It; If not, not onely This of Universal Tradition will stand, but also all the other Infallibilities will in Virtue of it be establisht on a firmer basis, than any who begins not with and settles the First Principle in *Controversy* could ever give them. This Foundation then they must either subvert, or they may fear the Papists will build such superstructures on it as will reach to Heaven. It rises apace, and has advanc't many Stories in a small time; as is to be seen in *Rushworths Dialogues*, the *Apology for Tradition*, *Tradidi vobis*, and others.

10. By this Discourse all Mr. *Stillingsfleet's* *If's* which follow, have their Answer; and he will see the knot easily loos'd in distinguishing the word *other*; by which if he means *disparate*, unconnected or unimply'd Points of Faith: No Divines of any number or account hold they can be *de novo*, much less our Church; If involv'd or imply'd in the main Point, he must show 'tis *absolutely* Another, and not rather a piece or part of the *Implying* one; as, *Homo est Animal*, is a part of *Homo est Animal rationale*. In the mean time let him consider what Logick tells us, that *The Conclusion is in the Premises*, which re-

flexion will much clear his Thoughts; and withall, that 'tis most unreasonable to deny the Church the Liberty to take asunder her own Thoughts, and clear them, upon occasion; by representing their Parts distinctly or in many Propositions, which were involv'd before in some one. A priviledge Nature grants all Mankind as a necessary Consequent to their working by abstracted Notions; this being no more than to regard or view the same thing now on one side, then on the other.

II. His Second Chief Demand is, *What security is there that in no Age of the Church any Practices should come in which were not in the Precedent.* I answer, Our *Practices* spring from our *Tenets*; If then he means *Ecclesiastical Practices*, that is, such as spring from Ecclesiastical Constitutions, there is no security at all; for these *are* to come in anew as oft as the necessity of Disci-
 plin or Government requires it: If he mean such Practices, as spring from Points of Faith taught by Christ, there is the same security no *such* new Practices can be introduc't as there is that no *new* Christian *Tenets* can come in. Now these later Practices are those we make use of in Tradition, as making Faith visible, being as it were its *Body*: He must mean then of These Practices to do his Discourse any service; and, so, of these he questions whether the Descendents *held themselves bound unalterably to observe what their Forefathers did*; otherwise to *know* barely *what they did*, was not enough.

enough to make them *follow* it. He argues well. To smooth as many rubs as I can, that so we may have no difficulty but our main one, I would reflect on the signification of the word *unalterably*. For, to introduce *new* Practices *consequent* to the former is to propagate, enlarge, extend and so *strengthen* them, not to *alter* them; in the same manner as to discourse *consequently* to a Principle or *Tenet*, is so far from *altering* it, that by the contexture of other Truths with it, it corroborates and establishes it more *unalterably* its self. They must then be Practices not of a *subordinate* but an *opposit* Nature to Christian ones which can be fear'd to *alter* Christian Practices. The Question then is whether Children or the Succeeding Age held themselves still bound not to bring in Practices and Tenets *contrary* to the Doctrin and Practice of the Precedent Age. And, the Affirmative is most Evident, in case they held those Tenets which Principled those Actions, *True*, taught by Christ, and commanded by him as the Way to bring them to Heaven; and those Practices *Consequent*. If then they held the *deliver'd Doctrin* *Christ's*, they could not but hold themselves oblig'd not to *alter* it, nor consequently its Practices. So that our Question is restrain'd to a narrower compass, and the onely Difficulty now is whether they held the Doctrin of Forefathers to be the Doctrin of *Christ*, or no.

12. I am heartily glad so acute an Adversary

as Mr. *Stillington* and one chosen out (if I am inform'd right) as a person conceiv'd the ablest to write against Catholicks, has so candidly confest here, p. 629. That *the onely thing to be prov'd in this case, is, That every Age in the Church in all persons in it looked upon themselves as oblig'd not to vary in any thing from the Doctrine and Practice of the Precedent Age.* He offers me my choice of three wayes to prove it : I accept of the way of *Reason*. He presses for a *demonstrative medium* to prove it; yet seems to dislike our pretence to *Demonstrations* for the Ground of our Faith. Not to note the unconsonancy of this carriage, I shall yield him the honour of professing he has *no Demonstration* but onely *Probability* for the Ground of *his*; and to make this serious protestation for my self, that I should esteem my self very dishonest did I assert and press on others any argument for the Ground of my Faith which I judge not *Evident*, that is, *Demonstrative*. This, I hope, will secure the Honesty of my Intentions, however my Weakness may permit me to fail in my performance. After this he endeavours to forestal my Reason for the Point in these words; *They have understandings of another world from others, who can conceive it impossible that men should not think themselves oblig'd to believe and do all just as their Predecessours did.* Which words I desire the Reader to review and note, for thence my Discourse takes its rise.

13. What is it then that we affirm the later Ages *oblig'd* to *hold* and *act* as their Forefathers held and acted? Wearing their clothes, or building their houses? No; For, both, those matters of their own nature are of trivial concern, and the fashion of both depend on *Fancy* which is too sleight a Principle to oblige to a Constancy. What is it then? To manage their Estates thus or thus; no, for the Inconvenience or Convenience of the different wayes were perhaps held not very material, and the judging which was best depended upon *Prudential Principles* which are of their own nature variable and accommodable to circumstances, and therefore not obliging them to *think* and *act* as their Forefathers did. Let us proceed? Was it some piece of *Skill* or a *Speculative Opinion* depending on the Goodness or Badness of the Ancestors knowledge? No: For, Experience teaching that men differ and are errable in such judgments, it could never oblige posterity to believe Unalterably as They did. Is it then some *Historical passage* or matter of Fact, of great note, and as such apt to strike their Fancy strongly, yet still such as the succeeding Age was not highly concern'd whether it were true or no; for example, that of *Alexander's Conquest of Asia* to the Asian and Grecian off-spring of the next age after? No; Yet Experience tells us the memory of this is fresh and lively (even amongst Us who are not the immediate descendents of those
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where he conquer'd) though some thousands of years since.

14. Before we go any further, let's examin how this History comes to obtain so firm and unshaken a Beleef from the whole World to this very day. And, first, he must be a very weak Speculater that can think the universal and strong Persuasion of this matter of Fact was caus'd by Books, *Curtius* his History for Example; For, since all Mankind knows naturally that Falshoods may as easily be character'd in Letters as Truths; 'tis evidently the continu'd Beleef of the *Thing* or *Sence* in mens hearts of its Truth, that is *Human Tradition*, which gives that Book all its Authority, and secures its strange Contents from being held Romancical; which the very *being-writ* could never have done. Let's see next whence this Human Tradition had its force to continue hitherto so settled and unalterable a Persuasion of *Alexanders* Conquests. And, looking into the Thing for Proper Causes, that is, the best *demonstrative mediums*, we shall find the Object it self was very Univerfall, strange, notorious, and held of concern to the then livers; which made their Hearts and Fancies full of it, and so oblig'd them to burst out into Expressions of it, and relate it to their Off-spring of the next Age. I but, what *oblig'd* the Off-spring to beleeve their Forefathers telling it, and to act (or talk of it again to *their* Children) as the Fathers did; without which obligation it could not have descend-

descended to us. Regarding once more the Thing, we shall discover that it was imprinted into the Off-spring by the Forefathers *Testifying* what their *Senses* had told them ; which put, Common Sense inform'd them the thing was Infallibly-true, and as Certain as if they had seen it with their own eyes. For, no reach of Reason but onely Extravagancy of Madness could have furnish't them with any imaginable motive, why the whole World should conspire to deceive them, or be deceivable in their Sensations. By this means the Conceit of the Thing or matter of Fact (as to the *main*, for circumstantial Considerations were not so *evident to all at first*, and so could not be *universally deliver'd as ascertain'd by Sense*) was in the same degree of firmness and Certainty rivetted into the Hearts of next Age ; and, so, there being necessarily in the Rational part of the World some curious persons, whom Nature her self could not but incline to an Inquisitiveness of what was done formerly, and others too naturally inclin'd to tell it Children who were capable of it and delighted with hearing such strange-true Stories ; It went down continuing by the way of Tradition to our very days.

15. But we have over-shot our mark. The question is of the Obligation not to believe *contrary* to Forefathers from Age to Age : Which being so, 'tis most Evident that our Question is by they barely *declaring* it quite put *out of question* ; since
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'tis absolutely Impossible Mankind should be inveigled into a *contrary* conceit or a Beleef that *Alexander's conquest was not*. If any doubt it, let him set himself to consider how 'tis possible for man's wit to go about to persuade it, and he will see 'tis to attempt direct *Contradiction*. For, it being a *matter of Fact* said to be *long ago past*, its very nature shows it depends on *witnessing* by *living* or *dead* Testimonie : If then all the *living* Testimony (which gives all their Authority to *dead* Testimonies or *Books*) is persuaded of it upon the score of former Universal and uncontrol'd *Testification*, the whole nature of witnessing or *Attestation* is engag'd for it. Since then the *onely Cause* able to persuade the *contrary* to *Alexander's* Conquests must be *witnessing the contrary*, and this is shown Impossible to be put, 'tis consequently an impossible Attempt or a labouring to put an effect without a Cause (that is a direct *Contradiction*) even to go about to introduce the contrary Assent.

What must we do then to proceed, our true Question being lost in too much Evidence! Should I severely challenge my own right, I might stand to it that our Question is at an end and therefore no further discourse is to be admitted about it. But, because I prefer the clearing Truth before my own victory, I will disadvantage my self to benefit my Readers, and show that in the matter of Fact, we are engag'd in Posterity were oblig'd (not onely not to believe *contrary*

trary, but) but also to believe *the same* their Ancestors did or to *continue* down the *same* persuasion which was fixt in their Progenitor's minds by means of their Sensations. 'Tis already evident then, that the second Age after *Alexander* was *oblig'd* to believe the First, because They saw with their *eyes* what was done ; But, how could those in the Third Age be *oblig'd* to believe the Second who saw it not ? To answer this, we must ask whether the third Age could be Certain that the second could not be deceiv'd in what the first Age told them (and the notorioufness of the Thing, being no Speculation but a plain matter of Fact, secures that:) or conspire to bely the Second Ages Authority ; and, common reason satisfying them, by the circumstances, of the Honesty of the persons, their Consent and the disinterestedness of the position, that they *could not* thus conspire, even the rudest have a Demonstration the Second Age truly testifi'd what the First said ; and so those of the third Age have the first Ages Authority certainly apply'd to them ; and, by means of its Authority, its Sensation too, and perfect Knowledge of the Thing springing from that Experimental Perception ; which therefore must needs work the same Effect upon the third Age, as it did upon the second. And by vertue of the same Argument upon the the fourth, fifth, and five hundredth, while it is known to have come down by the way of *Testification*, and this is known by its being *receiv'd*
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in the five-hundredth Age *as testify'd*; For, if the second Age could not tell the third it *was* testify'd by the first unless it *had been* so testify'd, the same reason I have assign'd for the Impossibility of that will hold for each Age to the End of the world, that is, 'twill follow no age could say a former Age *testify'd so*, unless they *did so*; whence nothing can come in *as Testify'd* by a former Age, unless thus Testify'd. If therefore the five-hundredth Age receiv'd a thing as *testify'd* (supposing the *notoreity* of it secur'd the thing from Mistakableness) it follow'd demonstratively it *was* testify'd; and, (to come close to our purpose) that the Descendents in each age, to the very end of the world, had the same Obligation to believe their *immediate Forefathers* saying it was *testify'd* by the former, as those of the third Age to believe the second, or the second the first.

16. Who ever looks into Rational Nature, with even that ordinary Knowledge with which the rudest person almost that lives does upon *material natures*, would discern the same Necessity or Obligation of continuing down by the way of Testifying notorious and Important matters of Fact, fixt at first in the minds and fancies of an Universality by the Existence of the Thing working on their Senses, as that in a long chain of Iron, one link drawn should draw all the rest; or, that the turning the First wheel, should move a thousand distant ones depending on its motion.

Nor

Nor doubt I but it will be made full as Evident, when rational Souls come to set themselves to reflect seriously on their own nature and procedure to Action; a speculation few Protestants are acquainted with; Bookishness and much reading being onely in Vogue with the talking Tribe amongst them. In the mean time Mr. *Stillingfleet* may see in the Instance now put, that is, in the strong Persuasion of *Alexander's* Victories yet continuing by Tradition, that there is an *Obligation* in one Age to *believe* another when they proceed as *Witnesses*; and this, not onely of what *they saw*, but of what others told them *They* saw, and of what some affirm'd they were told by others that *the Age before Them* saw; and so downwards; and that, as the Impulsive force is communicated from the Movers hand to the farthest-distant-wheel by the Application of the intermediate ones, the solid or Inflexible nature of the matter obliging the next wheel to propagate its motion; So the *Existence* of the Thing mov'd the First Experimental Percievers of it; and That solid Notion, which fixes every Truth, was the virtue which run thorough and gave force to all the rest; being apply'd by Universal Witnessing a plain matter of Fact (or others Testimonies) from each Age to the other; as great a Ty to Assent as Human Nature was capable of by natural means. For, that *Existence* of the Thing was the virtue which made this Persuasion so solid and

firm,

firm, besides what's said, is seen by this; that, were it deliver'd onely as an Opinion of the Things being so, its *strong conveyance* had not been able to elevate it beyond Opinion; for, the *stronger* That had been, the more perfectly it had been held Opinion still. The *Existence* then of the Thing had virtue to *oblige* to a full persuasion the thing *was so*, when *Apply'd* with Certainty; The Testification of the precedent Age is a Certain Applier of it, and Undoubtable, that is *Obliging to Belief*; therefore the next Age is (in such matters convey'd down this way) as strongly *oblig'd to believe* the foregoing as Reason can oblige it; that is, by *seen Effects* impossible to be without the *Existence* of foregoing *Testifications*; nor they, finally, without the *Existence* of the Thing.

17. I expect now what Mr. *Stillingsfleet* will reply to this discourse. Will he say there were no Causes laid to *oblige* the After-comers to believe the Fore-goer, that *Alexander* conquer'd *Asia*, but that it happen'd so by Chance? What will he say then to thousand other such matters of Fact, and indeed all that were done long ago, all which must either be held obligingly *this way or none*; (see *Corol. 24.*) Besides, the Causes proper to work on a *rational Nature* are *Reasons*: To say then there are no Causes able to make us believe *Alexander* thus conquer'd, is to say there is no *Reason* for it; and (Chance being nothing but a Cause unforeseen by us) to say

say all believe it by *Chance*, signifies *none* see *any reason* why they believe it; which makes all the world *Affes*; Or have I not hit on the *right Causes*? I shall thank Mr *Stillingsfleet* to help me out; and in thee mean time assure him that whatever Causes he assigns, obliging posterity to believe Ancestours in *this*, shall strengthen *Tradition*. Perhaps he will say, they may be oblig'd to believe such *Histories* deliver'd, yet not deliver'd *Points of Faith*. I shall wonder at the position; but, because I foresee he is like to recurr to this (for he must be forc't to say either this or what's worse) I shall prepare against it, by paralleling the Obligation to believe *this deliver'd History* to the Obligation to believe *Christian Faith deliver'd*.

18. To do this more amply we will consider Christ's Doctrin according to the whole complexion of Circumstances exprest in that common Verse,

Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando.

Quis? Who was the *Authour* and *Subject* of this Faith thus to be deliver'd; Not a poor mortal, but the *Wisdom* of the *Eternal Father*; not an ambitious self-extolling *Man*, but a self-humbled *God*, come down from his Heaven to be the World's *Saviour* and *Master*; every of whose Words and Actions were infinitely to be

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admir'd; and, consequently, requiring to be had in perpetual remembrance.

Quid? What *thing* was it which was deliver'd or Testify'd? A Doctrin containing Principles of the *new Life* they were to read as *Christians*, and so *Practical*, notwithstanding the Majesty of its abstruseness; a Doctrin Connatural and suitable to Reason, Man's true Nature, and so apt to sink into him & not be easily relinquishable; A Doctrin which bears in its very notion to be a Guid towards Eternal Bliss, and consequently that to forsake it is the way to Eternal misery, which therefore oblig'd Fathers to teach it, and Children to esteem themselves bound to learn it and hold to it. Lastly, a Doctrin all made up of most astonishing miracle and wonder; and, so, apt to strike a deep sence of reverence into hearts already imbued with it. Such was the nature of the Thing we call *Christ's Doctrin*, imprinted on the Sensations of the first Age of Christians; not a pittiful story of an *Alexander* or *Cæsar*; of Sleight concern, wonderment or practical Usefulness; but, in comparison of the other, like a Tale of a Tub; which, no hurt is done if it go in at one ear and out at the other.

19. *Ubi?* Where was this matter of Fact or Preaching this doctrin performed? In all, even the remotest parts of the world, and not onely in a peece of *Europe* and in *Asia*; and this openly: Especially in *Rome* the world's *Metropolis*, whence it could

could easily and effectually spread into the rest. Nay in the very face of Tyrants ; which things gave it a perfect Visibility ; and, lastly, in every private Family it was taught and put in practice ; which made it beyond dispute Sensible and Maniable as far as it conduces to Christian Life.

Quibus auxiliis ? By what helps or means ? By most amazing miracles, powerful Preaching and heavenly Living conformably to that Preaching ; which made those Principles or *Faith* visible and evident. Not by three or four Victories, imputable perhaps to Chance ; at least in which nothing Divine discovered it self engaged.

Cur ? Why was this doctrine of Christs taught and practis'd ? Not to satisfy the vain humour of impotent Ambition, but to deliver Mankind from the Devils slavery and hell fire its reward, and to bring him to everlasting Salvation.

Quomodo ? By what manner ? By writing it in the fleshy Tables of the hearts of the First Christians ; and, afterwards, continuing it by the way of *Testifying* ; the most connatural way to oblige the Generality to Beleeve of matters of Fact, that Nature knows.

Quando ? When ? In the First Christians when they were now at Age to judge of the miracles, and multitudes of Motives spoken of ; which aw'd, overpower'd and subdu'd their Understandings to a firm Beleeve and an high Reverence to the doctrine thus attested to be Gods: In the after-Christians when they were yet scarce able to speak

much less to judge; and taught by nature to believe their Parents. Hence a lively and reverential conceit was bred in their Hearts, by others serious teaching and their own practising, of the Sacredness and consequently Unalterableness, of that doctrine; ere they came to that Ripeness as to use their own Judgment; Nay, that doctrine was so deeply naturaliz'd into them by Christian Life ere they came to maturity of Understanding, that it became Unnatural and exceedingly Violent for them to *act* and *believe contrary* to what Fathers had taught. Whereas the story of *Alexander* was not proper to be told Children till they were at Age and fit for some kind of Scholership; and then, it was so little Practical that nothing was to be acted about it, but talking of it again; so that it lookt like a meer piece of Speculation and totally Unconcerning them. I add, that this Delivery by Attestation or Teaching went on linking the former Age to the later, by propagating it into new Subjects, not all at one time, but from year to year, moneth to moneth, and even less; according as the Understandings and even Bodies of Children budded into a Capacity of knowing saying or doing something which belong'd to Christianity; which still-continu'd Interweaving the former Age with the later, after a wonderful manner strengthens the sway of Tradition, and secures it both against Mistake and Deceit; neither of them having any possible place where the whole business is carry'd on by such immediate Steps.

20. I will not repeat over again these unconceivable Advantages, but leave it to Mr *Stillingfleet's* reflexion; and so, proceed to frame my discourse thus. If the conceited Sacredness, Concern, Necessity, Unalterableness, miraculously-attestedness, also if the Visibleness, Practicalness with extent to every particular, Connaturalness, &c. found in the notion and nature of Christs doctrine or manifestly-connected with it, render'd it incomparably Recommendable in every respect above the Story of *Alexander's* Conquests, and that plainest nature or Common Sense and daily Experience teaches us that, by how much more a thing is *Recommendable* or deserving to be believ'd and practic't, by so much more 'tis *Obligatory* to be believ'd and practic't; and that we find in *Unconcerning* Stories a continu'd Obligation lay'd in Nature for the Children to believe Parents (else such stories could never have descended with an hearty persuasion of their Truth hitherto) it follows that incomparably and in a manner infinitely greater must the Obligation be to believe Christs Doctrine than *Alexander's* or *William* the Conquerors Victories; or any History of the like nature whatever.

21. I have been much longer in such a point than the matter requir'd; it needed no more but to manifest that Common Sense tells us Nature obliges every man to believe those he takes to be *honest*; much more children Fathers; (or the next Age those of the former;) still more, if
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what they tell them be no Speculation depending on Fancy or private Judgement, but matter of Fact depending onely on Sense; that is, if they tell it them as *Witnesses*: But most of all, if they see we conspire in the same; For then the Obligation is so necessary, that I cannot conceive that from the beginning of the world there was ever found one single person so unreasonable as not to yeild to it. Whence also we can show every first Beginner of an Heresie is *αὐτοκατακρίσιος*, or *self condemn'd*; that is, conscious to himself that out of Pride or some Passion he goes against Evidence of Authority. Now, in Tradition all is carry'd on this manner. So that, if the Explainers of Tradition have not made provision for this point, 'tis because they thought there could not be found a Considerer so Unreasonable as to question it. Yet, because Mr. *Stillingsfleet* puts the whole stress of this Objection against Tradition in this, I shall (to give him further satisfaction) consider it practically.

22. Let us conceive then that the Apostles, Disciples, and Apostolical men, taught the first Age Christ's Doctrin (qualifi'd in the manner before declar'd) and recommended it as such (that is as Sacred, Unalterable, the way to Bliss. Taught by Christ, &c.) by Miracles and other Supernatural means; 'tis plain They had Obligation to believe Christ taught it. Well, they receiving it as such, that is, as Christ's, and, so, Unalterable, were bound to recommend it for such to the next Age.

Not

Nor does Mr. *Stillingfleet* question this: But[?] were their Children oblig'd to *believe* them While they were young tis plain they could do no other neither out of Reason nor Passion. But what were they oblig'd to when they were grown up to ripeness of judgement? 'Tis plain, that, were that Doctrin deliver'd as an *Invention* of their Forefathers, or some *Collection of their Reason* that it was Christ's, it was obvious for them to make this Discourse; We have natural Wit as well as our Parents had, and perhaps as good Circumstances to apply that wit and why then should not we cast about and consider whether that be indeed Christ's Doctrin, and taught by the Apostles, which they would persuade us is so? But, in case it were deliver'd as *ascertain'd by their Senses* to have been taught by the Apostles, what imaginable reason can they have of doubt? Can they think all their Fathers and Neighbours a pack of impudent Knaves, that conspire to abuse their posterity purposely to damn them, or that they could be mistaken in a Doctrin they were so highly concern'd to learn right, and had led their lives by ever since they were Christian? The third Age succeeds, whose Immediate Ancestours the Second Age told them they had been taught and brought up thus by the First. Nor have they more reason to doubt the Second Ages Attestation of the First Ages Doctrin and Life (it being an unmistakable matter of Fact) than the Second had the First's? that is, they were *oblig'd* to believe

lieve it. And, since each forgoing Ages Attestation is a plain *matter of Fact*, it follows that each succeeding Age has still *equal obligation* to believe the foregoing: Especially in a matter carrying along with it such powerful Recommends, and this out of its very Nature, as that the preserving and holding to it would bring them Infinite Goods, and the altering it Infinite Harms. Thus it goes on; and while it goes on thus, that is, while this Rule is follow'd, 'tis self-evident no Heresie could ever be. (Dis. 5. p. 8.) Whence by the way, if this be the only difficulty in Tradition; (that is, in case the next Age were *oblig'd* to believe the former, Tradition would still be follow'd, and so it would be self-evident no Heretick could be) then it needs no proof they have such an *Obligation*; for 'tis questionless there is an Obligation for men not to be Hereticks.

23. Well, but an acute Wit or great Scholar arises who begins to question this way. Let's see if he have a good reason, if not he is still *oblig'd*. Can he bring an ampler or Certainer *living Authority* for the contrary? Where shall he have it? For all the Christian world is against him, if he be the *first* (and so *only*) denier of this way of Tradition. Will he bring Demonstration against the Point? How can he against a *Truth*; for our case puts the point truly deliver'd, and only enquires into the obligation of believing Ancestours in such a Delivery; and he must not hope a *seeming* Demonstration can free him from his
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Obligation of believing Ancestours. For, whence hapened it that it *seem'd* so to him when it was not such? From Perfection in Science in that particular? No surely; for then he had not miscarry'd: From the Imperfectness of his Science? Then he ought the more to have *believ'd*: From Precipitancy? Then he ought not have been passionate. But, perhaps he will build on *Dead Testimony*, or some Book granted to be Sacred. In that case I ask, how knows he with such a Certainty as to build Faith and his opposition to the whole Church upon it (which ought be no less than a Demonstration) that he has the right Letter and Sence of that Book. Can he Demonstrate the exact conformity of its Letter from Copy to Copy, and Translation to Translation, and this up to the very Original? He may as well measure the back-side of Heaven. Will he recur to Traditions help? Tradition could onely perform this either by the way of diligent Examiners continu'd along and securely testifi'd, which (as was said) is impossible to shew; Or by continu'd Sence in Christian Hearts; and then 'tis plain if their Sence preserv'd the Letter rightly significative, he ought to take the Sence of the Letter from them too, as the Fathers use to press upon ancient Hereticks. 'Tis left then that he must pretend he will demonstrate some former Age has err'd; How I wonder? We have excluded him Scripture, the nature of the Points, and Authority of Living men. It may be he will alledge

ledge Testimonies of Historians, or Fathers. But, first, *Fathers*, taken as such, are not meerly great Scholars, but Eminent Parts of *Ecclesia docens* or Witnesses of the Doctrin deliver'd; Take away then the Certainty of *Delivery* or Tradition, there's no Certainty of Doctrin deliver'd, nor consequently of *Fathers*. 2^{ly}. An Historians Testimony signifies but his own private saying, unless authoriz'd by Sense writ in mens hearts or Tradition. 3^{ly}. Are those Testimonies (and the like may be said of Scripture-proofs) *evidently* against the present Church, or no? If not, 'tis a madness to talk of *seeming* Testimonies against so *vast* and *evident* a one as that of the whole foregoing Church. If *Evident*, 'tis inconsistent with mans Nature the Christian Church should recommend down for true Fathers and credible Historians those Authours which so evidently oppose her Doctrin: Or, if so great an Authority as the Churches delivers them down for fabulous or spurious, how can their Authority ever come to be undoubtable or Certain? The last refuge then of a passion-misled Reason is, asham'd of her want of Principles and loth to show her head, to pretend private Inspirations: Which therefore is the last *non-ultra* of all Heresies and the flower or most refin'd quintessence of all Faith-Reformatio. But, miracles failing these poor Creatures to shew forth the hidden divinity which they pretend possessees them, they quickly fade away; or, if they make any further progress, 'tis into

into phrenzy or perfect Madness, as we experience in our most miserably-distracted Country; which disposition is therefore the *Caput mortuum*, or *Terra damnata* of Heresie, and the last and most natural effect of relinquishing Tradition.

24. By this Discourse is seen that 'tis impossible the following Age and every person in it, unlearned and learned, should not be oblig'd to believe the foregoing delivering to them Christs Doctrin as receiv'd from hand to hand by way of Testifying : and that this Universal Obligation springs out of the Nature of that Heavenly Doctrin, and the Nature of the Way of conveying it downwards. 'Tis time now to revive Mr *Stillingsfleets* words against the possibility of proving this by Reason, and see how lank they look : They are they, neither more nor fewer : *It is hard to conceive what Reason should inforce it but such as proves the Impossibility of the contrary ; And they have Understandings of another mould from others who can conceive it impossible men should not think themselves oblig'd to believe and do all just as their Predecessors did.* Is this Mr *Stillingsfleet* who in the Appendix to his *Irenicum* §. 6. so rationally characters those for *more zealous than Judicious* discoursers who argue not out of the very Nature and Constitution of a Thing ; and here, in a discourse concerning the Rational way of looking into a point, quite overleaps all that concerns either the Nature or necessary circumstances of that Thing, and talks so rawly in common, that

that is, not one word to that particular purpose? Observe the words, *Oblig'd to believe and do ALL JUST as their Predecessors have done.* What means the word ALL? Does he mean we hold them oblig'd to cut their Beards, or wear such Garters and Hatbands as their Fore-fathers did? His raw words reach no farther: What means the word JUST? Does he think Faith being planted in Human, that is *Rational*, Nature will not propagate it self into *consequent* and *subordinate* Tenets and Practices? All the wonder then of the Impossibility of the obligation lies in his crafty and sophistical expressing it, which includes a fallacy of *non-causa pro causa*; for, not *any thing* convey'd down to *any fashion* is held by us thus *obliging* to believe and act accordingly, but *such a Doctrin*, and *so* convey'd as was before declared. Had he put our Position thus, as indeed he ought, it being the true case, *Children or Immediate Posterity taught by Fathers or immediate Ancestors relying on the way of Sensation, that such a Doctrin was taught or deliverd to be taught by God himself, as most Sacred, Necessary to be believ'd and practic't by all, being the way to salvation, so that to vary from it, or hold or practise the contrary, is the way to eternal misery, are all oblig'd to believe and act as their Forefathers did, and not introduce Contrary Doctrins and Practices to those they had receiv'd.* Had it been, I say, thus propos'd, there had been no such cause of wonderment: But all these, that

is indeed all of weight in the point, is quite left out. Such poor shifts even the best Wits must be driven to, when they would maintain a false Cause.

25. One word to *M. Stillingfleet*. He hath challeng'd us to make out this *Obligation to Belief* as the *only* Thing we are to prove in the Traditionary way ; he hath offer'd us the choice of our Weapon, either *Reason*, *particular Testimony*, or *Universal Tradition* : I have accepted his offer, chosen my weapon, and given here the first blow ; I hope he will not now run the Field, but return an Answer to my Discourse in the way of Reason, which I have chosen by his Offer. I am sorry for his sake my reflexions here are not more elaborate, being sent to the Press in loose quarters of sheets as soon as writ, more time not being allow'd me, nor I hope needful to answer such mistakes. Onely I request him when he replies, to take along with him the nature of the *subjecta materia*, the Doctrins and Practises we speak of ; the Nature of the Manner of delivering it, and the necessary Circumstances which give weight to both, as I have declar'd above ; and I promise him (God assisting me) a very serious Reply.

26. Ere I quite leave this matter, I desire to take the Reader along with me in my quest for a Reason or proper Cause why so judicious a person as *Mr. Stillingfleet* could come to doubt of such an Obligation in posterity to believe their Ancestours in a matter of fact, or a matter deliver'd to
have

have been (not *deem'd* or *thought*, but) *done*; or (which is equivalent being its necessary effect) *seen* or *known by Sense*. For, I make account there is not a man in the world or ever was (such is the Goodness of rational Nature given us by God) who in his natural thoughts could ever raise such a doubt, or think he could possibly frame his thoughts to a disbelief of the contrary; no more than any man in England (whom Speculative Scepticism has not besotted and unmann'd) can doubt of *William* the Conquerors, *Harry* the Eighth, or *Mahomets* Existence; much less judge the *contrary*; And, it appears at first sight to be a strange distortion or rather corruption of human Nature, which can so alter it. Now, looking into Things, I find it to be a proper and natural Effect of the Protestant's temper, and indeed of all who have left the Church. For their humour being to *chuse* every one his Faith by his private Judgment or Wit working upon disputable words; They wonder, and judge it very unreasonable their Posterity, thus imbu'd, should be oblig'd to believe and act as Ancestours do; and so should I too. For, while they can never deliver it to their Children as received ever by the way of Infallible Sense or Witnessing, but must say the former Church *de facto* err'd and consequently that themselves might do so too, so that they can only deliver it as depending or built on their own fallible Opinion in interpreting Scripture (all which is imply'd in their making Scripture's

ture's Letter the Rule of Faith, and allowing no Living Interpreter able to give infallibly the Sence of it) 'tis natural their posterity should *not* hold themselves oblig'd to believe Immediate Ancestors, but use their own Judgments and *chuse* their own *Faith* when they come at Age as well as They did; and Experience tells us they have done so in England till they have chosen fairly. And this horrid Unreasonableness is the venomous source, the First defective Principle, or indeed the very nature of all *Herésie*; imported also in the word it self, which signifies *Choice*, or *chusing one's Religion*; mention'd by *Clemens Alexandrinus* (cited above p. 135.) and counterpos'd by him to *Tradition*; as also by *S. Athanasius* (cited p. 133, 134.) where 'tis most excellently describ'd, and homely apply'd to the Protestants and such others, as the Reader may see. I am a bad Transcriber.

27. I have done my main task, and so shall only touch at his next paragraph. It begins thus; *It is to no purpose to prove the Impossibility of motion when I see men move, no more it is to prove no Age of the Church could vary from the foregoing when we can evidently prove they have done it.* You argue well. But two things are requir'd ere you can see our Faith varies from the former. First, To see what our Church holds *now*, and then to see what the former Church held before; and, if I see any thing you see neither well. For, while you cannot distinguish between *Faith* and its
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Explication , some School-men and Church, I have no hopes you should see candidly what our Church holds *now* : and, if you cannot at present see what our Church holds *now*, how will you ever be able to assure us you see what She held *formerly* ? The thing to be prov'd is a *plain matter of Fact* , and you have renounc't all *Living Attestation* the common and secure way to bring it down ; and consequently Fathers too ; For Fathers (speaking of them as such) being Evident Witnesses, Transmitters or Propagaters of the *Faith received* to Immediate Posterity , if you question *Delivery* or *Tradition* (which you do while you doubt Obligation in Posterity to believe Ancestours) you question whether there be any *Doctrin deliver'd* and so any *Fathers* : and I wonder how you can imagine any man oblig'd to believe Fathers, Historians or any that writ or testify'd things *long ago* , and yet think the next age not oblig'd to believe the former in a matter of Fact done *in their own dayes*. How far short then are your Evidences of the former Churches Doctrin, like to prove of being parallel to our *seeing a man move with our corporeal Eyes* ! But you *may* say any thing ; or rather indeed, forc't by your bad Cause, you *must* do so.

28. You call this Way of ours a *Superficial Subtily* ; I beseech you consider what you say ; Is that which is wholly built on the Nature of the Things (as you see ours is) *Superficial* ; or
Yours

Yours which is meerly an aiery Descant upon *dead Words*? What do you think *Controversy* is? I deal plainly with you, you may take it to be an Art of Talking, and I think you do so though you will not profess it; but I take it to be a noble Science; I hold its Object to be *rationem reddere fidei*, or to maintain *question'd Faith*, which is chiefly done by showing the Authority on which Faith depends *quoad nos* Certain. Hence, all other Authority depending on Tradition's, I hold Knowledge of its Certainty the First Principle in *Controversy*; And this being *quoad nos* necessarily antecedent to Authority, it can onely be manifested by Reasons taken from Things or men's Minds, *naturally*, and (if we discourse against those who grant the excellency of the first-preached Doctrin) *Supernaturally* affected or qualify'd; as you see I have endeavour'd in my Discourses.

29. So much for our Way. Now for yours: Who sees not first how *Words as interpretable* are its *subject*; and, if in the method you take to work upon them you lay one Principle which deserves the name of a Principle, I dare undertake to be of Mr. *Stillingfleet's* persuasion. He sees in my TRANSITION our Way laid open; Either let him acknowledge it solid, or remember having provok't us, he is challeng'd to produce something for his Rule of Faith, which begins with the natures of the Things in hand, that is of *Rule and Faith*, and approves it self solidier

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than ours. But 'tis so impossible their Cause can endure the Trial of that *clearing* Method, that I fear not either Mr. *Stillingfleet* or any Protestant Writer of the least prudence will dare to attempt it.

30. Will you see one Example of our Superficialness and Mr. *Stillingfleet*'s Solidness? He gives you both in his next words, p. 620. and assures the Reader we would prove *no alteration in the Faith of the Church* by such an Argument as would prove the world *ab æterno*. How strangely wide he roves from the mark? Our Argument runs thus, beginning *à priori*; Causes were laid in the nature of Christs heavenly Doctrin, and the nature of its Conveyance down by Testifying to make its Delivery continu'd hitherto; *à posteriori* thus; we find a present Effect (the present Persuasion of Christians their Faith descended uninterruptedly from Christ) impossible to be without such a Cause's Existence or its having been at first taught by Christ; whence we conclude that Faith came from Christ: Let us parallel it then to his. Finds he any such Effect in the world at present apt to spring onely from the Worlds Eternity as its Cause; or Causes laid *ab æterno* in the nature of the world apt to continue it hitherto? If he does, he must hold it was Eternal; If not, how unconsonant is his parallel? He makes our Argument run thus; *The present Age sees no alteration in it, and they could not be deceiv'd in what their Forefathers believ'd, nor they*
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in theirs, and so on in infinitum ; for no men did ever see the World made, and therefore it was never made, and so Eternal. In return, I must first profess there is not a tittle in it parallel to our *medium* ; and, at next, that I never saw in my life more absurdities coucht in so few words. For,

First, he should have begun, *The present Age has a firm persuasion it was ever, or have alledg'd some other Effect, without which 'tis impossible to argue to the Existence of a thing before, or a Cause.*

2^{ly}. He wrongly supposes a *Belief in the former Age* of the Worlds ever-Existence, saying, *They could not be deceiv'd in what their Forefathers believ'd.*

3^{ly}. The words, *Nor they in theirs*, falsely suppose a *Continuance of belief* upwards that the world was *Eternal*.

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5^{ly}. The words, *and so on in Infinitum*, suppose this belief did go on *in Infinitum* ; which put, 'tis beyond question, and plac't in the very Terms, that the world *was* *Eternal*.

6^{ly}. His reason for the last words, thus, *For no man did ever see the World made*, is manifoldly faulty ; for 'tis a negative argument, and, as such,

inconsequent ; since the world might have been made, whether any had *seen* it or not. Again, the first men might have known it certainly to have been made, whether they had seen it *making* or no. And, lastly, 'tis directly contradictory to what it should parallel ; For, we agreeing with them that Christ and his Apostles *did* teach a Doctrin thus qualify'd, first put its Existence *seen*, and thence conclude the *contrary* could never come to be held universally ; or else, we take a *present-Belief* of its then-Existence as ever receiv'd by *Testifying* : neither of which have any correspondence with his rambling chimerical Argument ; no two pieces of which hang together with themselves or any thing else.

31. He sayes, he can *evidence* the Alteration of Faith. I wish he would tell us first what an *evidence* means ; whether a strong *Fancy* of his own, or a *Demonstration*, onely which can excuse him for not believing the former Age Attesting. His first proof is, *Because the Scripture supposes a degeneracy in the Christian Church.* Incomparably argu'd ! why see we not the place ! Does it *evidently* speak of *Faith* or *Manners* ; the *Universal* Church, or *particular* persons ; that is, some Hereticks ? But be it in Faith ; Be it Universal. Does it suppose this Degeneracy *already past* (which is onely proper to his purpose) or *yet to come* ? That is, does it say there must be a Total Apostasie in Faith before the Year 1664 ? Alas, he had forgot this :
Yet

Yet for such wretched proofs as these, baptiz'd *God's Word*, have they left the evidently-attested Doctrin and the Union of the former Church. His next *Evidences* are his own Performances in some other parts of his Book. Truly the miserableness of these *Evidences* disinvite me from thinking the others worth a serious thought : But, if perhaps there be ever a Testimony among them that is not coincident with some of Dr. *Pierce's* faulty ones ; Let him single it out and print it at the End of his Rejoynder to this, it shall have a fair Answer from me, or some other more proper.

FOURTH

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FOURTH APPENDIX.

Subverting

*Fundamentally and manifoldly my Ld. of
Downs DISSUASIVE.*

I. I Had observ'd my self and was inform'd by others what harm my L. of Down's *DISSUASIVE* did to divers persons; yet I found also that it wrought different Effects in his Protestant Readers according to their respective abilities of understanding. Those who were thoroughly *Intelligent* universally dislik't it as a very weak and ungrounded Discourse; but the *middle* or rather *meaner* sort of Schollers who have sufficient capacity to apprehend the *Sence* of an Objection, yet not enough to weigh by Principles and so comprehend the *force* of it, nor to distinguish between Church and Schools, much less the Sagacity to dive into the many Sophistries, Artifices, and Indirect dealings which mis-us'd Rhetorick can employ to delude men's eye-sight, were many of them startled, and entertain'd a high conceit of it. To which helpt, that their well-meaning and natural sincerity permitted them not to suspect, and so be aware of any deceit in a discourse manag'd all along with so much *formal Gravity* and shewes of the greatest *Piety* that could be: For a grave carriage being,

ing, where Nature is not perverted wilfully, the proper Effect of a sincere Earnestness and perfect *Seriousness* in the heart, and, *Piety* being conceiv'd to be that which ought to heighten supernaturally that interiour disposition, they are consequently apt to breed in the observer of them a conceit of the greatest *Seriousness* in the world; Nay even, to those who are very weak and mean well, it gains the Affecter of this way so much Authority that it persuades those who esteem them for it they have perfect Assuredness of what they so soberly write or affirm. Whence follows that this kind of grave and seemingly pious demeanour, especially if carry'd on with a Constancy, is the most Effectual Engin in the world to inveigle rational souls which are not aware of the craft or by looking into Principles *above* it, whether the Discourser pleases: And I conceive our Country hath already so much felt its lamentable Effects out of Pulpits in the beginning of the late troubles, that all reflecters on it are sufficiently warn'd not to think all to be the solid gold of Truth which glitters with Saintly shows. Now, in this consists the most efficacious part of my *L. of Downs Dissuasive*; the rest, whether Reasons or Citations being very ordinary: And, 'twas this exceeding Plausibleness, and, by means of this, Harmfulness of that Treatise, which oblig'd me to alter my Resolution, and make the Answer to it a fourth Appendix to *Sure-footing*, which I had refus'd to the suggestion of my first Thoughts,

Thoughts, hoping some other would lay it open more at large. But how shall I go about to answer it : For, as *Sampson's* strength lay in his hair, the weakest part that can be found in a man, so the chief Virtue of the *Dissuasive* lies in the Godliness of its style ; which being meer voluntary words and most unapt to make up Propositions expressive of connected Sence or to compile a rational Discourse, 'tis by consequence the weakest peece of performance which can possibly spring from a reasonable Creature; Yet with this weapon I am soonest beat; nothing being more averse to my Genius than to *Saint* it in Scripture-phrases (a performance in which, I confess, a *Quaker* would easily worst me, and would even put the Dissuader himself very hard to it) especially in a *Controversy*, which ought to be a severe proof of the Truth of the point under debate. The way then which suits my humour best, and, as I hope, is most efficacious to conclude and satisfy, is to examin by Principles whether there be force of Truth at the bottome, grounding the Dissuader's long Invective. If there be, it ought to have all handsome advantages of Expressions allow'd it ; If not, 'tis no more, as to the Harmony of Truth, but the running a great deal of division upon no Ground.

2. I shall suppose the Reader of this Appendix hath already perus'd & weigh'd the force of my Reasonings in SURE FOOTING; which done, he will easily comprehend the strength of this Reply,

ply, and the manifold weakness of my L. of *Downs* DISSUASIVE. All Truths being *connected*, it follows that every Error is by consequence opposit to all Truths, and They to it. Hence each single Error lies open to be confuted *many wayes*, if the method of Reason or *Connexion* be taken. I take therefore that method; because, by its privilege of bringing things to First-Principles, 'tis apt to undermine and blow up Error from its very Foundations. Eight several mines I lay to perform this Effect; each of which Wayes is alone sufficient to do my work.

First Way.

3. **T**He First is to alledge that my L. of *Downs* has not one First or Self-evident Principle to begin with, on which he builds his *Dissuasive* from Catholick Faith. If I wrong him, let him do himself right by pointing it out and showing that 'tis opposit to our Church's Doctrine; which if he does, I here yield my self absolutely confuted. In the mean time I have prov'd that Tradition's Certainty is the *First Principle* of *CONTROVERSY*, and am confident in the Invincible force of Truth that all the Wit in the World cannot confute that position. And if it stands, he is convinc't not onely to *want* the *First Principle* of the Science we are to discourse in, but (his Cause forcing him to re-
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nounce Tradition's Certainty) to go point-blank *against* it, and so to invalidate to our hands all he shall write as a Controvertist; and how weakly he behaves himself where he goes about to lay other Principles, shall be shown when I come to answer his *First Section*. Now, seeing all Reason has force by relying on the Truth of the Premises, and they are known to be true either by being *First Principles* themselves, or by being finally resolvable into others which are such, it follows there can be no *true Reason* where there is no *First Principle*. Till he shows us then that he builds his Dissuasive on some First Principles, it will follow his whole Endeavour is to dissuade not by way of *Reason* but *Fine Words*, which are indeed the Substantiallest, strongest and most efficacious part of his whole Book.

Second Way.

THe Second Way is to exclude him all right to alledge either Scriptures, Fathers or Councils; I add, Reason, History or Instances, (See *Cor. 12. 15, 16, 18, 19.*) And, 'tis done thus. All discourse supposes that *Certain* on which it builds: But, if *Tradition* or the way of conveying down matters of Fact by the former Ages testifying can fail, none of these are *Certain*: therefore a Protestant or Renouncer of Tradition cannot with Reason pretend to discourse out of any of these: that is, (Reason being Man's Nature)

ture) he has lost his natural right to alledge any of these in way of proof. Now, that none of these are *Certain* if Tradition be renounc't is shown thus. Scripture's Letter as to its Incorruptedness, nay its very Being, is *Uncertain* alone, or without Tradition, as is confest by Protestants, and prov'd *Sure-Footing* Disc. 3^d. and 4th. So are Fathers and Councils too; For, *Fathers* being Eminent Witnessers to Immediate Posterity or Children of the *Churches* Doctrin received, and Councils Representatives of the Church, their strength as Proofs, nay their very Existence is not known till the notion of Church be known, which is part of their very Definition and to which they relate. Nor is the Being or Nature of Church known, till it be Certainly known who are truly *Faithful* or have *true Faith*, who not; which must be manifested by their having or not having the true *Rule of Faith*: Wherefore, since the Properties of the Rule of Faith do all agree to Tradition our Rule, and none of them to theirs, as was evidently and at large shown there in my five first Discourses: it follows, the Protestant or Renouncer of Tradition knows not what is either right Scripture, Father or Council; and so ought not to meddle with them, nor alledge them. Again, since pretended Instances of Tradition's Failing depend on History, & Historical Certainty cannot be built on dead Characters but on *Living Sense* in men's hearts deliver'd from age to age that those passages are true; that is, on
Tradi-

Tradition; it follows, that, if the way of Tradition can fail, all History is *Uncertain*; and consequently, all Instances as being matters of Fact depending on History. And, lastly, since Reasons are fetch't from the *nature* of things, and the *best Nature* in what it is, abstracting from disease or madness, *Unalterable*, is the Ground of the *human part* of Christian Tradition, and most incomparable strength is superadded to it as it is *Christian* by the supernatural Assistances of the Holy Ghost (*Disc. 9.*) 'tis a wild conceit to think any piece of Nature or Discourse built on it can be held *Certain*, if Tradition (especially Christian Tradition) may be held *Uncertain*.

Third Way.

5. **T**He Third Way is to examin the *Method* he takes in *dissuading*. For, common sence telling us 'tis not to be expected any should be able to perform any thing unless he takes the *right way* to perform it, 'tis Evident he cannot be held in reason to have *power* to *dissuade*, unless the *Method* he takes be *proper* to that Effect, that is, not *common* to that Effect and a *contrary* one. Now, to *dissuade* is to *unfix* the Understanding from what is held before; which includes to make it *hold* or *assent* that what it held before Certain is *False* or at least *Uncertain*. The Way then he takes must be evidently able to oblige to some kind of *Assent*, nay, as he handles it (for, I suppose he aims to make them *hold* as
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Protestants) to Assent to the *contrary*; which therefore must needs require the Evidentest Method imaginable, obliging their Reason to conclude that a man who takes this way of Discourse cannot but make good what he sayes; at least, that it may be strongly hop't from his method he will do it. This reflected on, let us weigh the *Method* my L^d. takes in his *Dissuasive*; and, if it be Evident to every ordinary capacity, that, as to the *Godly* part of it, the *Quakers* out-do him; and, as to its quoting part the *Smeectymnuans* us'd the same against the Protestants to confute Episcopacy (for They too quoted and gloss'd Scriptures and Fathers both) and indeed every Sect that has not yet shaken of the shame to disrespect all Antiquity; then 'tis also Evident that this Method is *Common* to those Discourses which have in them *power* to satisfy the Understanding, and those who have *no such power*. Now, that being most evidently *no* Method or Way to such an Effect, which many follow and take, yet arrive *not* at that Effect, 'tis plain to Common Sense that my L^d. of *Downs* miscalls his Book a *Dissuasive* and that it can have in it *no power* of moving the Understanding one way or other, unless he can first vouch some Particularity in the Method *he* takes above whats in *others*, in which we experience miscarriage, and himself professes we, though taking it, miscarry in it. Let us then search after this Particularity in his way of writing. Is it that he brings some
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stronger or more unavoidable sort of Testimonies then were ever yet produc't by others? No: Every Scholler sees they are so common that they have been hundreds of times produc't, and himself (p. 1. & 2.) acknowledges their vulgarness. But perhaps he invalidates all the Answers our Controvertists have given to those Testimonies and presses them *farther* against us, beyond what any has done yet! Quite contrary. He barely and rawly puts them down as if this were the very first time they had seen light, nor takes the least notice of any Answer at all given to them formerly. But it may be he layes Grounds to distinguish and press home his Testimonies, and so gives them their full weight which others have not done. Alas, no; I fear he never thinks of that, but judges (if we may conclude from his carriage) the deed done, so he but *quote*; nor can I see *one* Principle laid in his *whole* Book strengthening any one Testimony by bringing it to its Ground, *Experimental Knowledge* in the Authour he cites, that the Churches constant Voice and Practice manifested this her Sence; but as they are put down carelessly, so they are past over slubberingly, without the least enforcing them by way of laying Principles: Is he at least Particular in his Sincerity and Ingenuity? I know not how they will be satisfied with it who read his late Adversary Impeaching him for the contrary Vices, and some passages in this present Appendix. Where lies then this *Particularity*

cularity in his Method, without which his Dissuasive can never in reason be held Creditable? I speak ingenuously and from my heart; All the Particularity I can observe in it lies in these two things; First, that he huddles together multitudes of his own sayings, without any pretence of proof for the most part, and when he brings any they are such as we have spoken of. Next, that instead of enforcing his Proofs by way of Reason, he overflows strangely with godly language and Scripture-phrases; with which plausible manner of Expression most unreasonably and unnaturally he strives to combat the Wills of his Readers, before he hath brought any thing able to satisfy their Understandings.

6. Yet, though his Method have *no* particularity in it as to its *quoting* part, who knows but it may be *very particular* as to its Rational part, that is, full of Proofs which conclude evidently or *Demonstrations*! But I am so far from *feeling* the force of any *one* such Proof in his whole Book that I cannot *discern* its very *Existence*, or even any *Attempt* of that kind; and I dare affirm my L^d. of *Downs* never meant it or dream't of it. If he have any such I request his L^p. would in his Reply single them out from all the Pious and Inconclusive Talk which swell his Book, and I promise them very heartily to lend them a due and respectful Consideration. But I am sure he will neither pretend he has any, nor attempt the having any if he but reflect that a *Demonstration*

is a Proof which has in it a virtue of *obliging* the Understanding to *Assent*, and that it obtains this virtue by building on *Intrinsical Mediums*; that is, on *Proper Causes* or *Effects*, of which 'tis impossible the one should be without the other. This *clearing Method* onely the Champions of Truth *dare take*, and the Defenders of Errour *must avoid* under penalty of having their Cause quite ruin'd and crush't to pieces. And this severe Method of finding Truth, relying on the Goodness of my Cause, I fear not to take and stick to in *Sure-Footing* as appears there by my *Transition*: which sufficiently shows the Particularity of *my Method*; I expect now my Ld. of *Downs* would show me the particularity of *his*, or renounce all right and Title to *Dissuade*.

7. I have been something longer about laying open the Necessity of a *Proper Method to dissuade* ere one can in reason hope to perform that *Effect*, because I see plainly that, in the pursuit of Truth, *Method* is in a manner *ALL*; and, that 'tis impossible any Controversy should hover long in debate if a right *Method* of concluding evidently were carefully taken and faithfully held to. I have told my Ld. of *Downs* where he may see mine; and I desire him earnestly as he loves Truth either to admit it as *Conclusive* and follow it, or show it *Inconclusive* and propose us a better to begin and proceed with Evidently: And, that I may more efficaciously endeavour to bring him, nay provoke him as far as I may

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with Civility, to a Method particular and proper to dissuade, I declare here before all the world that I know his Cause to be so unable to bear it, and hope himself is so prudent, that he will never either venture to allow our Method competent to conclude evidently, nor yet go about to establish a better of his own.

Fourth Way.

8. **T**He fourth Way of disanulling my L^{ps} whole Endeavours, is to speak *ad hominem* and challenge him thus. Your Grounds allow neither Fathers to be *Infallible* in any Testimony you produce from them to *dissuade* with, nor yet your self in interpreting Scripture; nor (I conceive) will you say that you see with Infallible Certainty any Proposition you go about to deduce by Reason (if there be any such in your Dissuasive) to be necessarily consequent from any First or Self-evident Principle, therefore You are *Certain* of nothing you alledge in your whole Book. If then His Lordship would please to speak out candidly, he ought to say; *I know not Certainly that any thing I say against your Religion is true, yet notwithstanding I would fain dissuade you from holding the Faith of your Forefathers, and to relinquish a Religion you judge unalterable and hope to be sav'd by holding it.* Which were it profest and deliver'd ingenuously as it lies at the very bottome of his heart,
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his L^p's *Disuasive* would be a pleasant piece, and lose all power to move any Child of common Sense, nay the vulgar Reason of the wild *Irish* would be too hard for it. Now, that this ought in due candour to be profess'd, in case neither the Fathers nor Himself be Infallible in any saying or Proof of theirs, is thus Evidenc't. For, since to be *Infallible in None*, *hic & nunc*, (taking in the whole Complexion of assisting Circumstances) is the same as to be *hic & nunc Fallible in All*, or *Each*, and if they be *Fallible* or *may be deceived in Each*, they can be *Sure of None*; it follows that who professes the Fathers & Himself (though using all the means he can to secure him from Errour) *Fallible in Each*, must, if he will speak out like an honest man, confess he is *Sure of None*. Let then my L^d. of *Downs* either vouch Infallible Certainty in himself reasoning or Interpreting, or in the Authorities he cites, (I mean Infallible considering their endeavours in complexion with all the means on foot in the world to preserve them so) or else confess that, notwithstanding all means us'd by them they are in each Saying and Proof *Fallible*, and so himself *sure* of never a Motive he brings to *disuade* with. Now, to see so Eminent a Writer and chosen out on purpose (as he professes) by the whole Church of *Ireland*, go about to combat a settled Persuasion, held sacred, unalterable, descending from Christ by Attestation of Forefathers the Way to Bliss, &c. and bring no better Argu-

ments to do it but such as are (were he put to declare it and would speak out) *confessedly Uncertain*, is so far from being a competent *Dissuasive* from Catholick Faith, that 'tis when laid open (which is here perform'd) as good a *Persuasive* for the Generality of Catholicks to hold stedfastly to it as man's Wit can invent; and far better to the weaker sort of Speculators than to demonstrate the Infallibility of the Ground of Faith. Such advantage Catholick Faith gains by the Opposition from her Adversaries, if they be rightly handled, and their Discourses brought to Grounds.

Fifth Way.

9. **T**He Fifth Way is built on the fourth, or, indeed on the Protestants voluntary Concession. For they granting they have no Demonstration for the Ground of their Faith, must say they have onely Probability, and consequently that Faith *quoad nos* is *Uncertain*, or (to use their own Expression) that Faith in us is an Assent *cui non subest dubium*, of which we have *no doubt*, yet *cui potest subesse falsum*, or *possible to be false*, which amounts to this that Faith *at large* is but highly probable, much lesse *their* Faith as contradistinguished from *ours*. *Probabilities* then being of such a Nature that they do not absolutely weigh down the scale of our Judgment) I mean while they are seen to be but Probabilities as is
my

my L^d's case) it follows that if there be *Probabilities* for the other side, the way to *dissuade* from It is to put all those probable reasons in the opposit ballance, and then, by comparing them, shew they have *no* considerable weight, counterpos'd to those he brings for *his* Tenet. Now, that there is *no* Probability for *our* side is very hard to be said, since the whole world sees plainly we still maintain the Field against them, nay dare pretend without fearing an absolute baffle (which must needs follow had we not at least Probabilities to befriend us) that our Grounds are Evidently and Demonstrably Certain; nay more, dare venture to take the most clearing Method imaginable to stand or fall by, and withal are bold to challenge them that they have *no* Evident Grounds to begin with, nor dare venture to pursue that evidencing Method. But my L^{ds} own words in his *Liberty of Prophecying*, Sect. 20. §. 2. will beyond all confute evince it, *ad hominem* at least, that we have Probabilities, and those strong ones too on our side. I pick out some, leaving out other weighty ones which his Expressions had too much deform'd. His words are these. *Such as are the Beauty and Splendor of their Church; their pompous Service; the Stateliness and Solemnity of the Hierarchy; their name of CATHOLICK, which they suppose their own due and to concern no other sort of Christians* (he ought have said, *which the establish'd use of the word and de-*

riv'd down to the Successours of those who first had
 that Name, forces all, even their Adversaries, to
 give them when they speak naturally; and makes
 them despair of obtaining it for themselves) The
 Antiquity of many of their Doctrins; The Conti-
 nual Succession of their Bishops; their Immediate
 derivation from the Apostles; the Title to succeed S.
 Peter; the Multitude and Variety of people which are
 of their Persuasion; Apparent Consent with Antiqui-
 ty in many Ceremonials which other Churches have
 rejected; a pretended and sometimes an apparent
 Consent with some elder ages in many matters
 Doctrinal; the great Consent of one part with an-
 other in that which most of them affirm to be de-
 fide; the great Differences which are commenced
 amongst their Adversaries: Their happiness in be-
 ing Instruments in converting divers Nations:
 (he should rather have said, All) The Advanta-
 ges of Monarchical Government, the benefit of
 which as well as the Inconveniences they dayly en-
 joy; the Piety and Austerity of their Religious
 Orders of men and women; the Single Life of their
 Priests and Bishops; the severity of their Fasts
 and their Exterior Observances; the known Ho-
 liness of some of those persons whose Institutes
 the Religious Persons pretend to imitate, &c.
 After which he subjoyns. These things and di-
 verse others may very easily persuade persons of
 much reason and more piety to retain that which
 they know to have been the Religion of their Fore-
 fathers, which had actual Possession and Seizure
 of men's Understandings before the opposit Profes-
 sions

sions had a name. Thus he. By which words 'tis Evident we have Probabilities and high ones too, on our side; else how could they be able *very easily to persuade persons of much reason?* especially, they having as he sayes *more piety*; or *more then much*, that is *very much*; which argues rather that those motives for Catholick Faith were *sutable to Piety or Truths*; or at least exceedingly-seeming-Pious; so as the *great Piety* of those persons, neither checkt at the practice according to those Motives, nor their *much Reason* reach't to a discovery of their Fallaciousness. Whence, we may gather farther than those Motives so standing for us, are to be rankt in the highest degree of Probability. For since those Persons are confest to be very *Pious*, that is, very Good, and, so, unapt to be byast by Passion, and withal to have *much Reason*, 'tis plain the Cause of their Assent to Catholick Faith must be look't for in the Object, and have a wonderful appearance at least of Evidence or highest Probability which is able to conquer and satisfy so Rational and sincere Understandings. This being so, my L^d. cannot in reason own himself a *Disfluader*, nor pretend his Discourse has power to *disfluade* any from our Faith, unless he put down the whole force of what we build our Faith on together with his motives why he judges it false, and then compare or *weigh* those reasons together, and so conclude his absolutely preponderating. I doubt those very motives

delivered faintly by himself though an Adversary, are such, as, had he laid them open at large as he does his own Objections, he would have been infinitely puzzled to find others to overballance them with any show of Reason. But I will not put him upon so large a task : Let him onely consider on what Grounds the Rule of our Faith is built, to wit on sensible and unmistakable matter of Fact from age to age, and this unmistakableness confirm'd supernaturally by the concern of the Thing, obliging the Beleevers best care to preserve it, and by the Goodness implanted in their hearts by Christ's Doctrin, which kept lively awake that care (as it is at large laid open in *Sure-Footing*) and then compare it with Descanting upon Scripture's Letter by Human Skills, which is the Ground of the Protestants Faith as contra-distinguish't from ours, (or rather of their Dissent or negative Tenets) and show those Grounds preponderating ours, and then his Reader will have some encouragement to heed his Dissuasive, otherwise he can have none.

Sixth Way.

10. **A** Sixth way is to demand of his Lp. if he will undertake the pretended *Evidences* he produces whether Reasons or Citations have not also been (pretended at least to be) *answered* by Learned men on our side, and that the
Indif-

Indifferent part of the world have judg'd the Catholicks were so evidently concluded against by the Protestants, that they were not able in reason to reply. However he ought to have alledg'd that in the Evidences he brings the Protestants have had the *last* Reply, that so at least there may be some sleight conjectural *likelihood* they were Unanswerable or Convictive. This, I say, seems in reason fit to have been voucht, and (as Natural Method requires it) plac't at the very Entrance of his Book, so to give the Reader some faint hopes his perusing it might be perhaps to some purpose. What does my L. of *Downs*? He professes at the very beginning of his Introduction the direct contrary; For he confesses there that *the Evidences on both sides* (in questions of difference between our Churches) *have been so often produc't, &c. It will seem almost impossible to produce any new matter, or if we could* (observe how unlikely he makes it he should conclude any thing) *it will not be probable that what can be newly alledg'd can prevail more than all which already hath been so often urg'd in these Questions;* He should after the words [*so often urg'd,*] have added and never answer'd, otherwise the *often urging* signifies nothing as to Convictiveness. Yet, careless of this, he proceeds; *But we are not deterr'd from doing our duty by any such considerations, as knowing that the same medicaments, &c.* Which, waving the pious Rhetorick, to any Understanding man signi-

signifies directly as much as if he should profess, *I am resolv'd to write a Book against the Papists whatever comes on't, or whether it be to purpose or no.* For, to confess he brings nothing but *common objections* without undertaking to manifest they were never satisfactorily answer'd, is to carry it as if meerly to *transcribe* were sufficient to *convince*; especially, since the being *often urg'd*, is a very probable Argument they have been also *often answer'd*.

Seventh Way.

11. **T**HE Seventh way to confute him is to run over his whole Book, bringing it into Heads; and then by disabling those Heads, overthrow the Book it self; noting first that I guid my Quotations by its Third Edition in *Octavo*.

First then we will distinguish it into the *Matter* of His *Dissuasive*, that is, those things on which he builds his pretence of Dissuading; and the *Manner* of it, or the *Way* he takes to manage that *matter*.

The matter is divided into his Authorities and his Reasons: Wee'l begin with his Authorities. And, because we have found and shew'd Dr. *Pierce's* so fam'd Sermon to be the very *Idea* of inefficacious quoting: 'tis but reason we should manifest how the *Dissuasive* participates of its Nature, by ranking the Citations produc't in it under

der those ten faulty Heads which comprehend-
ed the other's Authorities.

To the First Head belong that of *Senensis* p. 21,
and 49. Those two p. 34. Those p. 46, and 52.
Maldonat's p. 55. Those p. 68. Those noted
with *b, c, d, e,* and *f.* p. 88. *Aeneas Sylvius* p. 89.
Those three so maliciously and wilfully misrep-
resenting the Catholick Tenet. p. 94. To which
add that of *S. John* p. 104. That cluster of Ci-
tations p. 111. and that which follows. *Eluthe-
rius* and *S. Ambrose* p. 113. His Scripture p. 121.
His general muster of such as wish't reformation
of manners in the Church 125, 126. Now, to
vindicate these Testimonies his LP. should
show to what purpose as a Controvertist he al-
ledg'd these more than for show. I note that
all these fall also under the 2^d, and 3^d. Head, and
perhaps diverse of the others.

To the 2^d. Head appertain, Those of *Tert. Bas.
Theop. Alexandrinus* in the Preface. *Tert.* p. 28.
S. Cypr. and *Dionysius* p. 57. *Ambrose, Hilary*
and *Macarius* p. 58. *Olympiodorus* and *Leo* p. 59.
His Scripture p. 60. and 61. *Justin* and *Origen*
p. 69. *Eusebius* and *Macarius.* p. 70. *Ephren*
and *Nazianz.* p. 71. Those p. 83, and 84. *Ori-
gen* p. 85.. *Lyra* and those noted *g, h, i, k, l, m.*
p. 88, & 89. The Council of *Eliberis* and *S. Austin*
p. 100. *Cyprian.* p. 110, and 114. Those p. 115,
and 116. Against all these 'tis charg'd that they
are raw and unapply'd, onely saying something
in common which comes not home to the point.

Where-

Wherefore to validate them His L^p. must show the contrary.

To the third belong those p. 28. Those p. 42. *Innocent*. p. 47, and p. 92. *Clemens* and *Origen*. p. 98. *Epiph*. p. 100. Those p. 104, 105, 106, 107. The *Extravagants* p. 113. Those p. 117. and 123. *Chrysost*. p. 119. Of these he is to show that he has levell'd them directly at a question rightly stated. I charge him with the contrary, and add that most of his other Citations fall under this Faulty Head.

Under the 4th are rank't those p. 29, 30. Those p. 49, 50, 51, 56. *Lombard* p. 64. *A castro* p. 67. *S. Austin* p. 73. *S. Gregory* p. 118. *Canus*. p. 119. These either impugn a Word for a Thing, or some Circumstance or Manner for the Substance.

Under the 5th the whole pag. 48. and all those p. 62. which are evidently *Negative*; and, so, *Inconclusive*.

Under the sixth are comprehended his First p. 20. and his Second p. 21. *Bellarmin* and *Gerson* p. 24. *Albertus* p. 43. *Roffensis* and *Polydor Virgil* p. 45. His first Citation p. 64. Which we affirm to be the Sayings of private Authours, or Schoolmen which others do or may contradict. To this Head also belong all those in a manner in his two last chapters, that is, in the better half of his Book.

To the 7th Head are related that of *S. Ambrose* in his Preface. *S. Austin* p. 5, and 6. Of the
Empe-

Emperours p. 12. *Leo* the 10th. p. 16. *Pius* the 4th. p. 17. the *Ephesin* Council p. 23. The Council of *Trent* p. 25. Those three p. 37. *Nazianz.* p. 58. *Tertull.* p. 69. The two first p. 73. Those three p. 87. and that p. 90. Those first p. 98. *S. Greg.* p. 100. His descant on the 7th Synod p. 101. 102, 103. *Symmachus* p. 114. And, lastly, my *Ld. of Downs* his Testimony of himself the page before the Title page, so strangely misrepresenting the Minde of that Frontispiece. These I affirm to be false and not to signify the thing they are expresly quoted for. Diverse of them also are direct Disingenuities, with a craft in the managing of them which argues design, and are inexcusable by mistake.

To the Eighth belong those of *Athanasius*, *Lactantius* and *Origen* in the Preface. *S. Chrysostom* p. 72. *Theodoret* and *Gelasius* p. 74. In which 'tis easy to be made appear, the words are *ambiguous*.

Those of the 9th, or Sayings of Writers on his own side are not worth mentioning: nor yet the 10th. or pieces of Scripture interpreted by himself; unless he will show us he proceeds on Evident Principles in fencing them, which so force the meaning he gives them that they can possibly bear no other. Till he does this, all his glosses are presumable to have no other foundation but meer strength of Fancy; and since he professes (p. 9.) that his *Disuasive wholly relies* on Scripture, that is on the *sence* he conceives it to have, the common mode of interpreting Scripture by
Fancy

Fancy which reigns so in the world, will make any sober man doubt, unless he show us the evident Principles which necessitated his Interpretation, that his whole Dissuasive is perfectly built on his own Imagination.

The Dissuasive hath two or three other faulty Heads of Citations besides those mention'd; as *Unauthentick* ones: such is *Origens* p. 98. and that against the 7th. Synod p. 103. Those also which cite an Authour but no place where they are to be found as *S. Cyril* p. 99. And lastly, brought to impugn Faith, but speaking onely of Alterable practices, as those p. 123. which he is to show Authentick, well-cited and Pertinent; And as well of these as the former he is to make good if he will go to work like a solid man that they have in them the true nature of Testimonies, and such Certainty as may safely be rely'd on for Principles of those serious Discourses he makes upon them. See *Sure-Footing* p. 172, 173, 174.

12. But that I may do right to the Dissuader, I am to confess ingenuously that he has in him one Citation which hath in it the true nature of a *Testimony*, or depending on the Authour's Knowledge had by *Sence* of the present Doctrin of the Church at that time. Now, though it be the Testimony only of one single Father, and so I am not in severity bound by Catholick Grounds which vouch onely *Consensus Patrum*, (which I understand to mean a Consent of so many and

so

so qualify'd as is apt to convince) to answer it, and not at all by Protestant Grounds which yield them all Fallible ; yet I have that regard for any thing that tends (though remotely) to *Solidity*, that I will even remit something of my own advantage to give it a respectful Consideration. The Testimony is of *Gennadius* cited by my L. p. 58, & 59. thus. *For, after Christ's Ascension into Heaven the Souls of all Saints are with Christ, and going from the body they go to Christ, expecting the resurrection of their body, with it to pass into the perfection of perpetual bliss.* To which my L^d. subjoyns, *and this he delivers as the Doctrin of the Catholick Church.* I take this excellent Testimony as put down by himself, to do which the usage of *St. Greg. Nazianzen's* immediately foregoing, gives me small encouragement. In answer then, I affirm that this Testimony so insisted and rely'd on as against us, is as plain a declaration of the Faith of our Church at present as any now-adayes Catholick could pronounce. For, since no Catholick holds that any goes to Purgatory but they who die *Sinners* to some degree, and that all who are *Saints* are *with Christ in Heaven*, as is evident by the Churches common language affirming constantly *the Saints are in Heaven*, and never that the *Saints are in Purgatory*, but the *Souls* onely, 'tis manifest that the words are as expressly for us as we our selves could invent or wish.

I hope it will not wrōg Method, if on this occasion

I show how Protestant Writers speed when they bring against us any Testimony of a Father speaking as a Father, that is, declaring that he delivers the sence of the Catholick Church; however in other Testimonies which speak not narratively, or matter of Fact, the very nature of words joyn'd with the variety of their Circumstances must needs afford room for ambiguity and several Glosses. I affirm then that this Testimony not onely is not in the least opposit to us, but is directly opposit to the Protestants in another point of Faith in which we differ. To discover this let us reflect on the words [*After Christs Ascension into Heaven the Souls of all Saints are with Christ,*] and ask what mean these words *After Christs Ascension*? And first 'tis Evident it puts a distinction between the Souls of Saints *before Christs Ascension* and *After it* in some Respect, and what is this Respect? most expressly this that the Souls of the Saints *After Christs Ascension* go from the body to Christ, that is, that *before the Ascension* none did. The avow'd Doctrin of the Catholick Church, professing that those who die Saints in the Law of Grace go straight to Heaven, but that the best Saints before our Saviours dying for them and Ascending with them, did not. Whence also we hold that Christ's *descending into Hell*, was to free them from that State of Suspence and Want of their strongly desir'd and hop't for *Bliss*. According to that Hymn of S. *Ambrose* and S. *Augustin*,

gustin, in the Common-prayer-book, so oft said over by rote but never reflected on, *When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death thou didst open the Kingdome of Heaven to all Believers*: Signifying plainly that no Believers found Heaven open for them till after Christ's death. By the Success of this one Testimony is seen how utterly the Protestant Cause would be overthrown by way of Testimony as well as Reason, were Citations distinguish't, brought to Grounds, and those onely admitted from the Fathers in which 'tis manifest they speak *as Fathers* or Witnessers of what is the present Churches doctrine.

To close up this Discourse about the Dissuader's Citations. He is to show us first that they fall not under the Faulty Heads to which they are respectively assign'd, or under diverse others of those Heads. Next, that they have in them the nature of *Testimonies*: And, lastly, (which is yet harder) that though they have in them the nature of *Testimonies*, their Authority is *Certain* and their language *unambiguous* so that they may be safely rely'd on for Principles or Grounds of a solid Discourse; This if he shows of any one citation which strikes at our Faith, I promise him very heartily to subscribe to the validity of all the rest.

13. Thus much for his Authorities. Next should follow a Refutation of his Reasons produc't against our Faith; for, as for those against our School-Divines or Casuists they concern not me as a Con-

trover-

trovertist: Let him and them fight it out. Now, Reasons that strike at our Faith must either be against the *Ground* of Faith, and those shall be consider'd in my Answer to his First Section; or against *points* of Faith: And these, may proceed two wayes; First by showing those points Incomprehensible to our Natural Reason, or unfutable to our Fancy; and this way he frequently takes, making a great deal of game upon such subjects, as any Atheist may do by the same way in points common to him and us. But this hurts us not in the least; in regard we hold not Mysteries of Faith Objects of Human Reason; nor Spiritual Things the Objects of Fancy; and, so, these Reasons need no farther Answer. The other way Reasons against Points of Faith may proceed, is to show those Points contradictory to some Evident Principles, at least to some other known or else acknowledg'd Truth? And these were worth answering; But such as these I find none in his whole Book, rather that he builds his sleight Descants or Discourses on some controvertible Text or Citation, relying on them as firmly as if they were First Principles.

Indeed p. 65. the Dissuader tells us of a *Demonstration* of his for the Novelty of Transubstantiation and that a *plain* one too: But, I shal manifest shortly from the very words of the Author *Peter Lombard*, on which his *Plain Demonstration* relies, that 'tis either a *plain mistake* or *plain Abuse* of him; nay argues the *direct contrary* to what the Dissuader product it for.

Some Consequences also he deduces *ad hominem* against diverse points of our Faith, built on our own Concessions or Allow'd Truths taken from the Fathers; by which he attempts to overthrow it: But these Consequences are so strangely Inconsequent, and those tenets he would counterpose so far from Contradictory, that 'tis hard to imagin whence his Reason took its rise to leap into such remote Conclusions. The instance in two, found p. 49, and 50. That the *Conflagration of the last day*, and the Opinion of some Fathers that *the Souls were detain'd in secret receptacles till the day of Judgment*, do both destroy *intermediate Purgatory*. Which Consequences if he will make good, I will yield his whole Book to be Demonstrative and Unanswerable.

In a word, all the good Reasons he brings, are taken from some of our Divines writing against others, and he hath done himself the right to chuse the best; which levell'd against the opinion of a less able Divine in stead of a point of Faith, must needs bear a very plausible show.

14. Next follows the *Manner* how he manages this *Matter*; which in the civillett Expressions I use I must call so many sleights to delude his Reader; and those so craftily coucht that none but a Scholler can discern the snare.

The first and Fundamental one is his wilfully mis-stating the Question all over. As p. 16. when he confounds the making new Symbols or Creeds, which signifies the *putting together* into a Profes-

sion of Faith Articles formerly held (as did S. *Athanasius* and the *Nicene Council*) with *making new Articles*. All his whole Section 3^d. of *Indulgences*, which he makes to signify meerly those which pardons sins or pains after this life ; whereas yet himself confesses p. 40. that those were not defin'd by our Church. So also his next Section of Purgatory, by which we mean a Pen-
 al State for those who die imperfectly contrite, and from which they are deliverable by the prayers of the Church Militant : Instead of which he impugns sometimes material Fire, sometimes the duration of it. It were tedious to reckon all his Faults in this kind, scarce one point escapes this voluntary misprision ; that is, he scarce discourages steadily (though perhaps he may glance at it accidentally) against one point of our Faith rightly stated or as taken in the declarative words of our Church. Now, common Honesty telling us that if one be to impugn any mans Tenet, the first thing natural method leads him to is to put down that man's very words profess'd by him to express his Tenet, and not what others deem, conceit or talk about the same matter ; my L^d. ought in due candour have first produc't the words of the Council of *Trent*, and then have level'd his opposition against *them* : and not have told us what School-divines say about the point ; or (having thus conceal'd the point it self) argu'd against some Circumstance or Manner of it instead of the Substance. Now
 this

this kind of carriage so evidently preternatural, and so constantly us'd, forces me to judge it sprung from voluntary Insincerity and not from Accident or Inadvertency.

15. His second Disingenuity at once Evidences and aggravates the former. 'Tis this, that, when by such a management he hath made the point odious, he uses to bring in our Churches Tenet in the rear; and, whereas Her speaking abstractedly frees her absolutely from the invidious particularities he would fasten on her Faith, he (as if he had resolv'd to abuse her, right or wrong) makes that very thing which should *clear* her tend to *disgrace* her more: As is seen p. 40. where he is forc't to confess our Church defin'd *Indulgences onely in general terms* (that is, none of his former Discourses so particularizing toucht her or her Faith) and then cries out the Council *durst not* do this nor the other: That is, she *durst not* do, and consequently *did not* do, what all his former discourse would persuade the world our Church *had* done: Worse then this is his Instance p. 60. where after he had pretended in the whole 4th. Section to impugn Purgatory, which he had confounded with School-opinions to p. 45. with the time of delivery p. 48. 51. 56. with a state of merit or demerit p. 57. 58. with his own Parenthesisses p. 59. and told us some stories of Revelations and Apparitions which seem'd to him most ridiculous; Lastly confounded it with *Simon Magus* his Opinion, *Plato's* or *Cicero's*

conceit, and *Virgils* Fiction; After all this he adds, *this doctrine which in all the parts of it is uncertain, and in the late Additions to it in Rome is certainly false, is yet with all the Faults of it past into an Article of Faith by the Council of Trent.* Now these big words *All the parts of it, the late Additions, All the Faults of it,* and all these said to be *past into an Article of Faith by the Council of Trent,* would make one think that Council had defin'd all that medley he had huddled together, for Christian Faith; but looking in the Council, not a Syllable of any of these is to be found, but barely these few words, that *There is a Purgatory, and that the Souls there detain'd are help't by the prayers of the Faithful.* Where we see but *two parts* at most, for there are but *two* Propositions in the whole definition: Again, *the late Additions* which he sayes are defin'd by the Council can be but *one* at most, that is, the second Proposition, that those Souls are help't by the Faithfull's prayers; And lastly, when he sayes *this Doctrine of Purgatory with all its Faults is past by the Council into an Article of Faith,* the large word *All its Faults* can mean onely the same second Proposition; there being nothing defin'd, besides the very doctrine of Purgatory it self, but *this.* Which kind of carriage of his, so sinisterly descanting on the point all along, not pretending to put down our Tenet at all till towards the End, then deforming it to be a bundle of God knows how many Faults defin'd for

for Faith, putting all these upon the Council of *Trent*, and yet avoiding to put down the words of the Council at all (though so few) lest they should discover he had lavish't out at randome, shew evidently the Dissuader stands not much upon Conscience or Sincerity, so he can colour and hide his disingenuities, and he is the greatest master of that craft I ever yet met with. Now, to avoid this Calumny (it being frequent in his book) I discourse thus, Points of Faith are Supreme Truth which stand in the abstract, and 'tis the work of Divines not of the Church-Representative to draw long trains of Consequences from them, and dive particularly into the Manners how they are to be explicated, or into their Extents if it be some Power: Nor is this particular in the point of Indulgences or Purgatory, but is found in all the other points of Faith, as every learned Divine knows very well. Again, 'tis against the Principles of Universal & Supream Government for a Church Representative defining Faith to descend out of its highest Sphere and engage in particularities (especially if they belong not to them, as School-opinions do not) but only to order in common, and leave the Application of their Common Orders to those who are to execute, or to Inferiour Officers; and, should they engage in particulars which are both below their highest office, and oft-times contingent and uncertain, they would commit the greatest imprudence in the world. Since then my L^d acknow-

ledges here p. 40. that the Council orders *all hard and Subtil questions concerning Purgatory, all that is suspected to be false, and all that is uncertain, and whatever is curious and Superstitions, and for filthy lucre be laid aside*, he should have shown that it befitted a Council's Gravity to descend to particulars, or to define negatively to the School-opinion concerning the Churches Treasure, and not rather order in Common and leave it to Inferior Officers to execute as circumstances should work upon their Prudence: which is, that in Opinions which pretend a Subordination to and Coherence with Faith, Divines should first clear their Incoherence with it ere They engage their Authority against them, and then to do it efficaciously being back't with the Majesty of the Council's Orders.

My L^ds words that the Fathers of the Council *set their Doctōrs as well as they can to defend all the new, curious and scandalous Questions, and to uphold the gainful trade*, is indeed to the purpose, but withal (by his leave) an unhand-some and most false Calumny against so many Persons of Honour and Quality; and so Invidious a Charge, that could he have prov'd it, he had not slubber'd it over so carelessly without offering any proof for it but his bare word; nor with a sleight proper to himself, immediately after he had directly charged it, have half recanted it with *However it be with them*: that is, whether they *did any such thing or no*, as he had so lately

lately and so pressingly challeng'd them to *have done*. And this I note as a *Third Head* of his *disingenuity*, frequent in his Book; that he brings very good proofs for diverse particulars which concern not our Church, but when it comes to the very point and which directly strikes at her, his own bare word, *We know, or, it is Certain*, (p. 54. l. 22. p. 62. p. 63. p. 67. &c.) is the best Argument he produces.

16. A fourth disingenuity is his Perverting wilfully the Intention of Catholick Authours. How he hath dealt with the Council of *Trent* in the two late mention'd points of *Indulgences* and *Purgatory* is already shown. In like manner has he treated the *Expurgatory Indies*; For, whereas by the word *Purgari* & *emaculari* in a Citation of his own p. 21, 'tis manifest they meant but to amend Corruptions of the late by the Antient Copies, he makes as though out of *gripes of Conscience* (forsooth) *that the Fathers were not right on our side*, they had therefore purposely gone about to corrupt the Fathers themselves, (p. 18. and 19.) so to make them on our side because we could not find them so. An Attempt impossible to fall into head of any man not stark mad; For this altering the Fathers could not have serv'd our turn unless we had made it known and publish't it; and, if made Publick could not be imagin'd to do the deed neither; for the Fraud must needs be made as Publick as the Book; So that an Action thus intended must
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be a Human Action without a Motive or Reason, which is a Contradiction. Worse is what follows p. 21, & 22. but withal the malice of it is more easily discoverable : For 'tis evident by the particulars he mentions in those Indexes or Tables that the Printer or Correcter who made them was an Heretick, and put in those Tables what his perversness imagin'd was found in the Fathers : Whence it was but fit his whole Index should be expung'd : Not that we fear the Fathers, but that we disallow the wicked intentions of the Index-maker, who abuses the Fathers to injure us.

So p. 62. he would make Catholikes themselves *dissatisfy'd* of the *Ground of Transubstantiation*, because they say *'tis not express'd in Scripture* : as if Catholiks held that nothing could be of Faith but whats expressly found there ; whereas he well knows they universally teach and hold the contrary. But his abuse of *Peter Lombard* p. 64. & 65. is very remarkable, though perhaps it might spring out of his little Experience in School-divinity. To make *Transubstantiation* seem a Novelty he would persuade his Reader *Lombard* sayes, *he could not tell whether there was any Substantial change or no* : Whereas that Authour Dist. 10. brings Testimonies of the Fathers to prove it, and concludes thence that *'Tis evident that the Substance of Bread is converted into Christ's Body, and the Substance of Wine into his Blood*, which is what the Council of
Trent

Trent calls *Transubstantiation*. And there ends that Distinction ; After which immediately succeeds the 11th. *De modis Conversionis, Of the Manners of this Conversion* ; and of these he says he cannot sufficiently define whether *this Conversion* be *Formal, or Substantial, or of another kind*. So that *Substantial* here supposes the *Conversion of the Substance of Bread into Christ's Body*, and is put by him onely to signify one of the *manners* of this *Conversion* ; which he explicates to be, *Sic Substantiam converti in Substantiam ut hæc essentialiter fiat illa, that one Substance is so converted into another Substance that the one is made essentially the other*. Whereas others who also hold *Transubstantiation* do yet explicate that *Conversion* by putting the body of Christ to succeed under the same Accidents in place of the Substance of Bread annihilated. Now this *Manner of Conversion* (call'd by him a *Substantial Manner*, in opposition to *Formal*, which he makes to be a *Conversion* both of Substance and Accidents, and not in Opposition to the change of one Substance into another) he leaves Unde-fin'd ; but the *Conversion* it self of the Substance of Bread into the body of Christ which is our point, he both defines, hold, proves out of Fathers (Disc. 10.) and calls them *Hereticks* that deny it : How unfortunate is my L. to quote an Authour as not holding *Transubstantiation*, then to call that Citation a *plain Demonstration* that it was not known in his days ; whereas he both
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professes to hold it, and, by alledging Fathers for it, evidences he holds it was held anciently; and, lastly, gives my L. such hard language for not holding it himself. Whether it be likely my L. should light by some accident in reading *Peter Lombard* onely on the 11th. Dist. and never read or light on the end of the 10th. let Indifferent men judge. I onely desire the Reader to observe how ill my L. comes off with his *plain Demonstration*, and to remark that he ever succeeds worst when he most aymes at a good and solid proof; the reason of which is because Truth being Invincible, the neerer one closes to grapple with her the worse still he is foil'd. Those few Instances may suffice for the 4th. Kind of the Dissuaders disingenuities, which is to pervert the Intentions of his Authours; of which sort, were it worth the pains, I would undertake to show neer an hundred in my L^{ds}. *Dissuasive*. This piece of Art being now so customary to him that 'tis even grown into a second Nature.

17. His fifth kind of disingenuity is a most wilful one and most frequent too, for it takes up far the better half his book. 'Tis this that he rakes up together all the less solid or ill Opinions and Cases (and sometimes deforms the good ones) of some private Writers in the Church which he will needs lay upon the Church her self as Mistress of our Faith. Nay, so strangely unjust he is in this Particular, that whereas it evidently clears

clears our Faith, disengages the Church, and shows it but Opinion when other Catholick Doctors uncontrolledly write against such an Opinion or Explication, himself often alledges that very thing which should clear the Church, and and makes use of it to her farther disgrace; First, making the *School* and *Church*, *Private Opinions*, or Explications and *Faith* all one; and, at next, that the difference amongst such Opiners and Explicaters argues our difference in Faith; How strange a malice is this! Was there ever any time since the Apostles in which there were not in the Church diverse persons and even some Governours bad in their lives, and also Erroneous in their Opinions, when the Abstractedness of Christian Faith restrain'd not their Understandings from descending to particulars nor secur'd them in such discourses depending much upon human Sciences? Do not the best Champions of Protestants object to the Ancient Fathers themselves such Errors in Opinions? Yet no ancient Heretick was ever so weak as to make that an Argument against the Church of those times. Did not many Protestant Writers hold many Roman-Catholick Tenets, as may be seen at large in the Protestants Apology? Yet no Catholick in his Wits thought therefore the Church of *England* her self was Roman-Catholick, I have heard that one of their Chief Ecclesiastical Officers, namely Bishop *Bilson*, writ a book purposely to justify the *Hollanders* Rebellion against the King
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of *Spain*, maintaining that Subjects might in some Cases rise against their Sovereigns and turn them out of their Government? And yet Catholics are far from that peevishness to esteem the Protestants disloyal in their Principles but honour them highly for the contrary Virtue, even though they are pleas'd to permit us their Fellow-sufferers for the same loyal Cause, to be abus'd and branded publickly for Traytors by every disloyal Scribbler. And, to come neerer home, did not my L. himself formerly write some strange Opinions, (I need not name them) yet no Catholick was ever so absurd as to charge his Church with those Tenets. But, which is yet far worse, he imputes to the Catholick Church such licentious Cases, - which not onely Private Authours may and do freely contradict but even Multitudes of Church-Officers, namely almost all the Bishops in *France* in Diocesan Synods, nay the Head of the Church himself has disapproov'd in condemning the Apology writ for them. Yet, for all this, all must be our Churches fault whether she will or no; and our Doctrin, though she condemns it. Was ever such a disingenuous Writer heard of! But what aggravates most the Case is, neither the Church of *England* nor the Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, nor any Officer or Bishop of hers that we heard of did ever in any solemn Act blemish those Authours cited in the Protestants Apology by condemning their Books, nor yet those writ by
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the Dissuader, though they judg'd them amiss; but, on the contrary his person is advanc't and chosen for their Champion; and yet our Writers are soberer & more candid than to impute to their Church any of these not-yet-disavow'd Faults, whereas my La. (for want of better Proofs) will needs clap upon our Church any misreasonings of private men, though our chief Church Governour and many Inferiour ones have discountenanc't and blemish't them. Nor is it onely every defect human nature is liable to in reasoning or acting which must be made our Churches Crimes, but every unfavorable Circumstance Man's Nature can light into, and their defective Effects are all made by the Dissuader's Logick to spring from meer Popery; nay the very National Rudeness of his wild *Irish* is (in his Preface) confounded by his carriage with our Churches Doctrine; and the Inability of their Teachers with much Rhetorick complain'd of, and character'd to be Popery, when himself enjoys the revenue which should educate them better and encourage them.

Against this kind of unreasonable procedure in the Dissuader, I levell'd those Corollaries from Corol. 31. to. 40. which I intreat my Reader to review and him to consider particularly. In the mean time I would ask him on this occasion a few short Questions. May not any one remain a Catholick, and never hold or practice these Cases and Opinions? Do not Catholicks impugn
them

them as much as Protestants? Does he find any of
 those Opinions or Cases in our Catechisms, or any
 Command of our Church to hold or act them;
 may even in that most common point of extending
 indulgences to the next world; but they who
 will use them; may, who will not, need not?
 How then does he hope to dissuade from Catho-
 lick Religion, by impugning that which touches
 not that Religion nor concerns any ones being of
 it? And why does not he rather fear all sober
 men will see his aim by this declamatory kind
 of Opposition to endeavour to gain credit as a
 great Anti-papist, and in it to convince solidly
 his Readers, whose experience (if they know
 any thing) enables them to give a ready and
 satisfactory answer in their own thoughts to all
 those Questions I have now ask't, and so, to
 confute near three parts of His Book. He saw
 it himself, and though he carries it on all along
 as if he were willing all should be thought the
 Doctrine of our Church or Faith, yet, fearing
 the Calumny is too manifest to be cloak't, he
 provides excuses and Evasions before hand, in
 his Title (p. 127.) saying, *The Church of Rome,*
AS IT IS AT THIS DAY DISORDER'D,
teaches doctrines and uses practices which are in
themselves or in their immediate CONSEQUEN-
CES direct Impieties, &c. So that he speaks of
 our Church precisely as having some disorder
 in her, and that they lead to ill onely by Conse-
 quences drawn from such disorderly Tendencies; and
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who's the drawer of these Consequences? Himself. But, grant his position that there are Disorders in the Church (I mean not in Faith, held Universally and obligatorily, but in unobligatory Opinions and Practices) I ask does he think there was ever any time in which there were not some Disorders in the Church, or ever will be while Original corruption lasts? Does he think the very time of the Apostles was exempt from such frailty; or that *S. Paul* complain'd for nothing of the Pastors in those primitive and purest times (*Phil. 2. v. 21.*) that *Omnes quæ sua sunt querunt non quæ sunt Jesu Christi!* Again, thinks he it any wonder that a disorder'd Tenet or a Falshood in a point belonging to manners is apt to lead *by consequence* to ill actions; none doubting but that as Virtue is the connatural Effect of Truth, so is Vice of Falshood. What hath he got then by this kind of Proceeding, taking up better half his book? Onely this, he hath proof'd there is Original Sin in the world, and so it's Effects, Ignorance and Interest; Again, let him consider how disputative an Age this last Century has been, and what infinit multitudes of Writers concerning Opinionative Points of all sorts have been in our Church, how voluminous, how descending to particulars, or Cases, and this both in School-divinity, Morals and Canon-Law; and then let him speak seriously whether he can conceive it possible in human Nature, there should not be much Contingency in such

an Universality depending on their private Reasons; whereas scarce two men debating the same point particularly, can light into the self-same Consequences, but differ in their deductions. Thinks he it possible many should not be Ignorant and so miscarry casually, many Passionate and incline to some Tenets because suitable to their humour; many conceited of their new Inventions, and thence, judging their Consequence to be connected with the point of Faith, cry it up to be *de fide* in their opinion, and alledge that, denying *this*, you by consequence deny *Faith*? This being so, nay impossible to be otherwise, and every Reader that sees the Dissuader's unreasonableness against us easily judging he would pick out the worst Instances he could find in that Infinity of Authours, and (the very complexjon of his style being wholly Invidious) expose them to shame with all the most disgraceful Rhetorick so great a wit as his heighten'd by that bitterest of Passions could deliver; he will easily be able to make an Estimate what he may judge of my L^d's performance in this kinde.

18. But now what's all this to to our Church? For his Title p. 127. tells us 'tis *the Church of Rome which teaches such Doctrins and uses such Practices, &c.* The Notion of *Church*, as one would conceive, is terminated and bounded precisely within the limits of its Definition, *a Body of the Faithful*; and Logick tells every one who under-

understands it, that, since we work by abstracted notions, or conceive a thing now thus, now otherwise, we must not confound those notions but hold strictly to the formal meaning of the word which expresses the thing we undertake for. We are then to expect in honesty, that, since the Dissuader charges all those Doctrins and Practices on our Church, all his Testimonies to fasten them on her should be of our Churches words, or Expressions of the Churches Faith; we need not doubt then but they will all be Definitions of General Councils. Let the Margent inform us. The first Citation is of *Navarr's Enchiridion*, a private Casuist. The 2^d. of *Reginaldus*, another Casuist. The 3^d. and 4th. of *Sotus* and *Medina*, two other School-Divines. Then comes in *Reginaldus* again, & then *Sotus* again; & in this tenure he proceeds for 133 pages; that is from p. 127, to p. 260. not quoting the Council of *Trent* past 3, or 4. times. (but once, as I remember, the words of that Council) and as oft abusing It by his strange misconstructions.

I e. For instance take his first Quotation of that Council p. 135; which I the more insist on, because on that occasion I shall lay open his crafty and voluntary defiling every point he touches with most abominable misrepresentations, and those vizarded with an outward form of Holiness and such devout expressions as a Saint from Heaven would scarce use, lest prudent men should

think it too much; which I intended for a **SIXTH** Head of his disingenuities.

After then p. 133, and 134. he had made all the most odious Cases he could pick out *the Roman Doctrin*, because the books of three or four Authours perused and allow'd by two or three others as not opposit to Faith, (See Coroll. 33.) that is, the private Reasons of half a dozen Divines conceiv'd so, which he amplifies beyond all bounds of moderation; that one would judge a General Council or Provincial one, at least that many Church Governours or Bishops had recommended those Cases to be held and follow'd; at length he tells you sadly p. 134. that *This, though INFINITLY INTOLERABLE, yet it is but the BEGINNING OF SORROWS*; Then follow the *SUPER-INFINIT Sorrows* themselves; the first of which *Sorrows* is the Council of *Trent's* Doctrin; and, if it be *Naught*, 'tis certainly the *Chief* of them, and so (had I a word to express it so high which the Dissuader's Rhetorick would easily reach) it should be phras'd something above *Super-infini*t; in regard by the Sacredness of it's Authority it would be a Ground and an Abetment to all the wicked Cases issuing from it. Ere I come to examin it I premise this note that such Testimouies as *This* are onely to my L^ds purpose if he will argue against our Churches Doctrin; In the success of these then lies the whole Trial of our Cause. We have seen how he has sped formerly in his *plain Demonstration*,

tion and his onely efficacious Testimony of a Father; let's see how he thrives in this, which we must acknowledge beyond all Evasion to express the sence of our Church.

20. His last ¶. then p. 134. begins with describing a true and Perfect Contrition and its Sacred Recommendation as sufficient to blot out Sin; All this is well, nor is there, as far as I know, a Catholic in the world that was ever taught otherwise; what follows? Yet, sayes he, *the Church of Rome does not allow it to be of any value unless it be joyn'd with a desire to confess their sins to a Priest, saying, that a man by Contrition is not reconcil'd to God without their Sacramental or Ritual Pennance: actual or votive. And this is decreed by the Council of Trent, &c.* Then comes thundring in a Declamation fraught with such Invidious yet Holy Rhetorick that any honest unexamining Reader would almost lay his Salvation on't, he had all the Reason in the world. *Which things* (adds he) *besides that is against Scripture, & the promises of the Gospell, and not onely teaches for Doctrins the Commandments of Men, but evacuates the Goodness of God by their Traditions, and weakens & discourages the best repentance & prefers repentance towards men before that which the Scripture calls Repentance towards God, & Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.* And there ends his paragraph, in which his passion was in such hast that he forgot to add an *Also* to answer to the word *Besides*. Now L^d have mercy upon us!

What strangely wicked Doctrin is this which can occasion such a clutter of Devotion and Inevitiveness jumbled together! Attend Reader, and from one Instance which I pick't not out purposely, but took the first that my discourse led me to accidentally, learn the nature of all the rest; for scarce one passage in his whole book is free from this Fault.

The Council Sess. 14. as it is commonly reckon'd, (not 4th, as perhaps his Printer mistook it) c. 4. speaks of *Contrition*; which it distinguishes into *Perfect Contrition*, the same my L^d describes; and declares that *It reconciles a man to God before this Sacrament* (to wit, of Penance) *be actually received*; and *Imperfect* or *Attrition*, springing from *Consideration of the vileness of Sin*, or *fear of Hell*, not from Love of God as its motive; and to *this* it requires *actually* the Sacrament of Penance, this being properly efficacious to advance by Preparations to it beforehand, (which Attrition gives them will to make use of) and the whole course of Exercises in it or belonging to it, that *Attrition* into *perfect* or properly call'd *Contrition*: And (speaking of the first sort or proper Contrition,) It adds farther, that *Reconciliation to God is not to be ascrib'd* (*ipsi Contritioni sine Sacramenti voto QUOD IN ILLA INCEVDITUR*) *to Contrition without desire of the Sacrament WHICH IS INCLUDED IN IT*; that is, *in Contrition*. Thus the Council. I note

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First, the Dissuaders craft in not putting down the words of the Council. A practice frequent with him (as I shew'd before) and purposely omitted, as appear'd evidently then and will do more now, because not at all favourable to his insincere humour of deforming all he meddles with.

Next, by this means, he, handling onely *Perfect Contrition*, makes our Church require *actual or votive Penance* to Its Sufficiency ; Whereas the Council expressly voids any necessity of actual Penance to this or proper Contrition, and onely requires it to *Attrition*.

3^{ly}. He omits the words *which is included in it* ; which put down had disanull'd all his whole discourse and cleared our Church from all his Calumnies ; For this shows the Councils sence to be that Contrition alone, if qualify'd as it ought to be, reconciles to God ; but that to be qualify'd as it ought to be, it *includes* a purpose or desire of doing other duties incumbent on the sinner by reason of his Sin ; and signalizes this particularly of his duty to the Church in resolving to come to the Sacrament of Penance. Let us parallel it. Suppose the Council had said. *True sorrow for sin will save you ; but not, unless you have a will to restore what you have stoln, for otherwise your sorrow is not true, in regard true sorrow for sin includes a will to rectify what sin had disordered.* Where's now the occasion of

my L^{ds}. ranting declamation of the Councils going against Scripture, and the promises of the Gospel, teaching for Doctrins the Commandments of men, of evacuating the goodness of God by Traditions, of weakening and discouraging the best Repentance, and of preferring Repentance towards men, before that which the Scripture calls Repentance towards God and Faith in our L^d. Jesus Christ. Yet, supposing that sinners are commanded by Christs Law to give account of their Souls to the Church and receive their Absolution and Penance from her, as well as they are to restore what's stoln, the case is undeniably parallel.

But, since many other duties are included in Contrition, as an obligation to restore credit or goods unjustly taken away, to repair temporal damages our Neighbours have incurr'd by us, and the spiritual ones of Scandal, asking pardon for affrontive Injuries, curing our former Uncharitableness and wordliness by giving Almes, and such like: a purpose of all which, if our Contrition be right, ought to be included in it; 'tis worth Enquiry why the Council particularises this of coming to the Sacrament of Penance. And to Catholicks who understand the nature of that Sacrament, the Answer is so easy that 'tis needless. For, after the heart is contrite or substantially turn'd, there remains no more to be done but to wash of the tainture of bad Inclinations Mortal Sin uses to leave behind it, and
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to make Satisfaction to our Neighbour or the World : Wherefore, because the wholesome Sacrament of Penance, rightly us'd, is ordain'd and apt of its own Nature both to wash away those remaining stains by sorrowful and penal actions enjoyn'd by Church disciplin, and also to ty men to the Execution of all due Satisfaction to the injur'd World ; hence, the heart being truly converted interiorly, this Sacrament is the most Efficacious means to set all else right, & so to come to it is the onely remaining duty (as including all else) and for that reason 'tis particularly exprest by the Council that true Contrition must *include* a purpose to come to it ; because, if true, it must needs include a desire to take the best means to rectify what's amiss. And, lest a Sinner should be apt to conceit and say within himself thus, I am truly sorry for my offending God, there is then no more to be thought on ; the Council most prudently declares that, That will not do unless they desire likewise to set right what they had disorder'd, of which the Church is to be the Judge and careful Overseer, and so 'tis their duty to the Church to let her take Cognizance of it. The Disfluader did ill then to phrase it *Ritual Penance*, as if opely a dry Ceremony had been enjoyn'd by the Council ere the Soul could be *reconcild* to God, whereas 'tis a Sacrament of its own nature executively satisfactory of all the kinds of duties, and efficaciously reparative of all the disorders which are
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the Arrears and Effects of a sinful Action: But he did worse to omit the Councils words, and so leave out totally *Quod in illâ includitur*, which candidly put in had made all his Process to no purpose: But worst of all, when he could not but see all this, to inveigh against so innocent, so rational, charitable and wise Proceedure of this Grave and Venerable Council with the harshest Expressions that ever were clad in Holy Language. And, it were good my Ld. who is so high against our Casuists, would let us know by what Cases he guides himself in his whole Book, where he sprinkles Scripture Holy-water all over as if every thing were a Devil he met with, and here particularly, in wilfully publickly and causelessly calumniating not a private person, but an whole Council consisting of so great a multitude of the most Grave, most Venerable, and most Sacred Personages in the whole Christian World.

21. A seventh kind of his Disingenuities is his Exaggerating and magnifying manner of Expression; by virtue of which he can make any *mote* seem a *Beam*; and though the Fault would ly in a very small room, perhaps require none at all, yet, as men blow up Bladders with wind, he can so swell and puff it up by plying it with his airy Rhetorick, that it looks as big as a mountain; whereas come neer it, examin and grasp it, that will not now fill your hand which before took up the whole prospect of your Eye. He
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can also by placing things in false lights make even the greatest Virtue seem a Vice, and then make that new-created vice a monstrous one; Both which were visibly discovered in our last Instance out of the Council of *Trent*.

22. I pass by many other of his petty Disingenuities; as his interposing Parenthesis's of his own; speaking most confidently where he has least Ground, so to make up the want of *this* with abundance of *the other*. His confounding good Cases with bad; Some private Bigotteries with acts of true Piety; Books approv'd by the Church with those of private Authours; understanding *spiritual* things grossly and *materially*; as in his whole business of Exorcisins: In which, were I in as merry an humour as his L^r. is there, I could make his discourse there far more ridiculous than he makes any thing found in the Churches Ritual, which book we are onely to defend or he to object, if he would deal candidly. Himself confesses the Inquisition of *Spain* corrected one of those Books, he names, and I know no obligation any man has either to use or abet the others; and then to what purpose were they brought against the Church?

23. The last greatest and most notorious disingenuity is his most unworthy and most Intolerable Calumny against all Catholicks that they are Traytors, and unfit for human Society. He names not these words but that he endeavours to have the thing beleev'd by his Readers appears thus:

thus: The Title of his third Chapter, p. 260. is this: *The Church of Rome teaches Doctrins which in many things are destructive of Christian Society in General, and of Monarchy in special.* We see here what he charges on our *Church*: and, since 'tis known all Catholicks not onely are oblig'd to *hold*, but to hold as *Sacred* and of *Faith* what the *Church of Rome* teaches, nay, to be ready to dy for that Faith, 'tis plain his Endeavours are to make us pass in the Opinion of his Readers for persons who hold Treason and Villany *Lawful*, nay *Sacred*, and that we are ready to dy and hope to be sav'd by such damnable points of Faith. Nor will his false-hearted Pretence, p. 462. exempt any, while 'tis known that nothing is more deeply rooted in our hearts than our obligation to believe as the *Church* believes and teaches. In particular he assures his Reader, p. 462. that, *No Contracts, Leagues, Societies, Promises, Vows or Oaths, are sufficient security to him that deals with one of the Church of Rome*; And p. 279. that the Doctrins of our Church are great *Enemies to the Dignity and Security, to the Powers and Lives of Princes.*

'Tis not fit we should use here the Language proper to express what's the due return and genuine brand for so malicious a Calumny: But perhaps it were not unfit nor injuring the modesty of Subjects humbly to beg Protection for our Innocence against the virulent tongues and pens
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of our uncharitable accusers; whom neither Reason nor Experience will restrain from going on still to stigmatize us all with the Faults of a few rash (or sometimes misconstru'd) Writers. But when writes the Dissuader this? After such fresh Testimonies of the unanimous Loyalty of Catholicks to His sacred Majesty and his Royal Father, spending their lives and Fortunes in his service. And against whom? Against a Multitude in which are found very many Noble and Honourable Personages, and many thousands of others very considerable and remarkable for their Fidelity. How strange a Wickedness is it then to calumniate so highly and so publicly so many eminently deserving and Honourable Subjects of his Majesty! Now, the mischiefs naturally apt to flow from such a Calumny are these. It breeds ill Correspondence between our Fellow-Subjects and us, and makes us ill look't upon by them, which violates Civil Unity so necessary for the Peace and strength of a Kingdome; especially being between those two parties who have ever been so friendly and brotherly in their Affection and Allegiance to their Prince, and Fellow-Acters and Sufferers for his Cause; It discourages Loyalty to see that after such best Testimonies of it we are not even able to obtain a bare acknowledgment that we are Loyal, but that it shall still be lawful for any one at pleasure to brand us for Traytors, and this publicly in print in the face of all England? And last-

ly (were not our known Fidelity too strong an Antidote for his malice) it tends to breed a conceit in our Governours that we are not to be endur'd in any State, and onely fit to be ruin'd and extirpated; not to mention the breach of Charity ensuing such unworthy Criminations, which must needs breed very many Feuds, and unneighbourliness between private persons all over *England* and *Ireland*: Nor will there be ever any hearty Union in Church or State, till that wicked Uncharitableness of affixing upon a whole party the faults of some few be totally laid aside.

24. Now on what does my Ld ground these horrid Charges against our Church, or how proceeds he to make them good? After the old fashion, of quoting the private Opinions of a few Authors, viz. *Emonerius*, Father *Barnes*, *Emmanuel Sà*, *Tolet*, *Vasquez*, *Navar*, &c. Now my Ld supposes his Readers are to be credulous silly Asses, and to believe that these private Casuists or Discourfers are the *mouth of our Church*; that she by them *declares* what we are to *believe*; that such private Discourses are so many *definitions* of our Churches Doctrin or Faith: That these Discourses are held by our Church to be *Constant* and *Certain* (for *such* all Catholicks hold *her Doctrin* or *Faith* to be) whereas every Child knows these and such like Opinions are contrrollable & *changeable* as the Moon; that they were taught by Christ and his Apostles, whereas any one may and himself does quote who

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first invented them : that they who deny or impugn them are *Hereticks*, whereas yet others *do* and any one *may* write against them at pleasure. Lastly, that these Points are all *Divine Revelations*, whereas the very nature of the thing shows and himself confesses they are all *Human deductions*. These Madnesses which are my L^d's First Principles in this whole Chapter and the Chapter foregoing, that is, in better half his book, if his Reader will be such a Bedlam as to yield to, then all his discourse is as sure as Gospel ; but if not, then 'tis Evident such Pretences are flat and most unconscionable Calumnies against our Church.

Little better is his quoting two or three particular Acts of some Popes: does he think the words *Church* and *Pope* are Equivalent, or that the word *particular act* signifies *Doctrin* or *Faith* that he should think three or four Acts all in several kinds, that is, one in each kind, argue the *Churches Doctrin* or *Faith* in those points. This in case he deals truly with those Popes ; but I know he is apt to deform all he meets with, and I see he does that of *Pope Clement* p. 268. which makes me suspect the rest. That Pope extinguish't the *Templars* ; and confest that *de Jure* he could not do it, but that he did it *ex plenitudine potestatis*. Here my L^d so interprets *de Jure* that he makes the Pope disown *any Justice* in doing it, that is *own an Injustice* in doing it, for that's my L^d's Intention in wresting those words ; which being impossible to conceive the Pope should

profess of himself, 'tis clear he meant by *de Jure* the same we mean by the words [*by Law*] that is, that there was no *positive Law* of the Church impowering him to dissolve them, yet, the Exigency requiring it, his Office might give him a *natural right* to do it; by which if Governours might not act in great Emergencies, but must be ty'd to let all go wrong because it happens no provision is made against it in any *written Law*; All Churches, Kingdomes, Cities, nay Families would be at the same loss the Spanish Master was at, who hiring a proud Servant and agreeing with him that he should do nothing but what was concluded between them and writ down, a while after falling in the dirt under his horse, and calling to his man to help him out, he told him he would first consult his written Paper whether that were put down there or no; where not finding it, he let his Master ly. But the case of Pope *Clement* is far from the Envy he would asperse it with: for why may not the Pope dissolve the Templars by his Power without Law, whereas Christian Princes and the Church universally complain'd of them, and mov'd him to it, and so their Consent went accompany'd with this action of their Chief Governour.

25. He hath onely two passages in that whole Chapter which even seem to concern our Church. One of the Council of *Trent* concerning a point of Practice put down by him thus, p. 266, 267.

That

That if a man have promist to a woman to marry her, and is betroth'd to her and hath sworn it, yet if he will before the Consummation enter into a Monastery, his Oath shall not bind him, his promise is null, but his second promise that shall stand, and he that denies this is accurst by the Council of Trent. Thus my L^d. ; where he tautologizes and layes it out at large to amplify it the more, adds the words *hath sworn it*, not found in the Council, but put in by himself because he was resolv'd we should be *Perjur'd*, and avoids, (as was his frequent custome) to put down the Councils own words in a distinct Letter ; so that his additions, may be safer and in more hope to escape too open shame. But to the point, I ask my L^d. as a Divine ; Does not he hold Heaven our last End, consequently that all our Actions are to be steps towards it, consequently that there can be no ty to embrace any state of life in case it appear upon mature consideration of circumstances highly unapt and dangerous to the attainment of Bliss ? I ask again ; would not my L^d. himself renounce actually living with a wife if he in his conscience judg'd so, but keep his promise let his Salvation go whether it would ? If he sees this plainly, then the difficulty consists not in breaking a promise made to a Temporal end, subordinate to our spiritual Last End for our Last Ends sake, but in this whether such a Case can be put. I propose him one ; may not a man come to see by better

knowledge of his Spouses humour, her newly-discover'd dishonesty, the Inconveniences he shall incur by her ill-condition'd Friends, and many such like, that such a Cohabitation tends to make his whole Life a hell upon Earth; which case is very possible and sometimes happens, to the eternal and temporal ruin of both parties, and the Infinit Scandal to the World? In this case does he not think in his conscience it had been better in all respects they had been parted ere Matrimony had been consummated? If then the man or woman to redeem their rashness in so lightly promising chose to debar themselves from all future hopes of marriage, and quite forsake the world to serve God in a Religious Life, it at once clears the reality of the Inconvenience, and the persons Intentions, and satisfies Temporal expectations, nay ennobles in the conceit of good Christians the Attempt by the knowledge, as far as any human Action can give of any Intention, that the person had no *base End* in his Action, but that which is *infinitely Best*. Oh, but this will *break all Contracts, Leagues, Vows, &c.* Let not my L^d. fear, there is too much Original sin in the world, for very many to run rather to a severe Life in a Monastery, and there to make vows of Chastity than to go to bed with their Brides. By this may be judg'd how my L^d. jumbles some *good Cases* with other *bad ones*, and makes all equally *naught*, did my designe of an Appendix give me leave to trace him through them all.

His

26. His next passage seeming to touch our Church is alledg'd, p. 265. *Thus it is affirm'd and was practis'd by a whole Council of Bishops at Constance, that Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks, &c.* This is something now, being the *Affirmation* (I suppose he means or would be thought to mean *definition*) and *Practice* of an approv'd General Council. Attend now, Reader, for here the Dissuader once or twice at least in a whole Chapter ayms to speak to the purpose.

But first, what a favour is this of my L^{ds}. not to put down the *words* of the Council where it *affirms* this? For this had made the case *plain* and the fault unavoidable. Next, (which is yet a greater kindness) he not so much as cites the *place* in which this *Affirmation* is found; and to disabuse the Reader, I assure him faithfully there is no such place or words found in the Council. To say that Safe Conduct given by Lay men absolv'd from the Secular Court but not from the Ecclesiastical, is quite another thing from his Invidious Proposition, and withal very Rational; For why should it, since both their Causes and Laws are distinct? Whereas to violate Faith given, and upon this score, because the party to whom I gave it is an Heretick, which my L^d. falsely charges, is most unmanly, nay Diabolical. Yet, though it lay in the Churches power to proceed Juridically her way; yet it lay in the Emperours to hinder or differ the Execution if any publick Concern made it prudent. But what I

stand upon (with leave of others) is that *no safe Conduct was promist them to return*, but onely to appear and have a fair trial. My reason is, because in the *Safe Conduct* given by the Council to *Hierom*, (and we may with reason conceive it was equivalently given to both) we find it given with this conditional clause, *Justice being still preserv'd* ; Also, *Appear according to the tenor of thy foresaid writing to answer to those things which one or more will object to thee in the cause of Faith, that thou mayst receive and perform in all things the accomplishment of Justice.* Which implies that he was to expect Justice from the Council if he clear'd not himself. Again, a disciple of *Husse's* who writ his tryal and death, and professes himself as much verit in the particulars as his senses could make him, complains indeed of safe conduct given by *Sigismund* in Writing of coming and returning ; yet, putting down the very form of Safe Conduct, no such thing as *returning* is found in it. Nor did *Hus* in all his defence complain of *Safe Conduct violated*, except when he was first bound, which was upon occasion of his flying and being brought back. Nay, the Emperour alwayes threatned *Hus* that he had rather burn an obstinate Heretick than defend him. In a word, all this clamour is built on the Testimony of the Hussites, and an imperfect relation writ in *Dutch* by an unlearned Catholick, which was greedily catcht at by such as leapt for joy to find any
licks

thing to bespatter the Church with, and startling some unattentive and too credulous Catholics, drive them, zealous of defending the Council, to an unwarrantable position; which Tenet and its practice my L^d. himself knows well the Generality of Catholics hate and detest as much as himself.

Eighth Way.

27. **T**He eighth and last Way is to pick out as well as I can those Propositions or Principles my L^d relies on, and show their Weakness; which is sufficiently perform'd by singling them out, and then naming them PRINCIPLES, they are so quite unlike what they're call'd. Now his *Principles* he layes in his first Section; I mean, his main and Fundamental Propositions, which because he relies on, yet never proves, we are from his carriage to take for *Principles* and Self-evident to him, though he himself calls them not so; for 'tis dangerous to them who have not Truth on their side even to mention the word *Principle*, *Evidence* or *Demonstration*.

His First concerning Scripture I shall speak to anon.

A second seems to be this p. 6. *We all acknowledge that the whole Church of God kept the Faith entire and transmitted faithfully to the After-ages the whole Faith; that is, to the Ages next after the Apostles*, as he expresses a little before, call'd by him p. 7. *the first and best Antiquity*,

and signify'd to mean *the First three Ages*. Now the Positive part of this Principle is good and Assertive of Tradition, but withall unapt to stead him. The Negative part of it, or that the third Age transmitted it not to the fourth, and so forwards, imply'd in his Discourse, would onely stead him; but 'tis left unprov'd, and so is a Voluntary Assertion, and strangely ridiculous. For, if the first two Ages kept the Faith entire and transmitted it to the third, 'tis Evident the Third was able to transmit it to the fourth, and so forwards; wherefore, it being Evident from the Concern of the Thing it was also *willing* to do so, 'tis demonstrable it *did* so. This Principle then on which he so much builds is either not for him, or else highly against him.

28. Another main and Fundamental Proposition (or Principle) is found p. 7. and as the former concern'd the Tradition of the Church, so this and the three following ones concern the Authorities of Fathers. *The present Roman Doctrins* (saith he) *which are in difference were Invisible and unheard of in the first and best Antiquity*. That is, no Heretick had arisen in those dayes (or in the first three hundred years) denying those points, and so the Fathers set not themselves to write Expressly for them, but occasionally onely; and yet, by his leave, our Controversies are frequent in citing them for diverse points, especially for the Ground of our Faith, the Churches voice or Tradition, to the utter overthrow

throw of the Protestant Cause. So far this improv'd and main position, disannulling all use of the Fathers of the first 300 years in our Controversies, is from not needing proof or being *Self-evident*.

29. It may be his respect and value for the Fathers of the next Ages will make amends for this rashness. He tells us immediately after, that in the *Succeeding Ages, secular Interest did more prevail, and the Writings of the Fathers were vast and voluminous, full of Controversy and ambiguous Sences fitted to their own times and questions, full of proper Opinions, and such variety of sayings, that both sides eternally and Inconfutably shall bring sayings for themselves respectively*. Now, if they be so qualify'd that both sides may eternally dispute out of them, and neither be ever able to *confute* the other or conclude, then let him speak out and say all the Fathers after the first 300 years are not worth a straw in order to decision or Controversy; nor yet the Fathers of the first 300 years because they spoke not of our points *in difference*; and so there is a fair end of all the Fathers and of his own Dissuasive too for that part which relies on them, which looks like the most authoritative piece of it. The Reader will easily judge now whether we (as he charges us, p. 18.) *have many gripes of Conscience concerning the Fathers that they are not right on our side, or the Dissuader*. Our constant and avow'd Doctrin is (that the Testimony of Fa-

thers speaking of them properly as such, is *Infal-
lible*; that in two Cases they speak as Fa-
thers; that is, when they declare it the doctrin
of the present Church of their time, or when
they write against any man as an Heretick or
his Tenet as Heresy. Some complexions of Cir-
cumstances also may be found out by much
reading and comparing several considerations
which make it Evident they speak as *Witnesses*;
though it be more laborious and tedious to com-
pass a Satisfaction this way. Whereas (as ap-
pears by our Dissuader) the Protestants neither
acknowledge them *Infalible*, nor indeed *Use-
ful*. And this is my Ld's FOURTH PRINCIPLE,
which with the former destroys the Efficacious-
ness of all the Fathers, & invalidates all that part
of his own Book which should seem weightiest.

30. Notwithstanding the two former Principles
to invalidate the Fathers, it may still be said by
the Catholicks in behalf of their validity (as was
by me now) that the Sayings of Fathers as *Wit-
nesses* are *Convictive*; and therefore it should
seem fit my Ld did lay *another* Principle to pro-
vide against that. He is not unmindful of it, but
hath taken order about it. For, though p. 9. he
tells us *the Fathers are good Testimony of the Do-
ctrin deliver'd from their Forefathers down to
them of what the Church esteem'd the way of Salva-
tion*; yet that is to be understood according to
the Rule premised p. 8. thus. *Things being thus
it will be Impossible for them* (the Catholicks)

to conclude from the sayings of a number of Fathers that the Doctrin they would prove thence was the Catholick doctrin of the Church, because any number that is less than all does not proove a Catholick Consent. So that unless each single Father affirm each single point to be of Faith or the Doctrin of the Catholick Church (which, morally speaking, is Impossible to happen) it follows by his words that *'tis Impossible to conclude thence the Catholick Doctrin of the Church*; which amounts to this, that *'tis Impossible to conclude any thing in Controversy from the Fathers even taken as Witnesses.* And this is his FIFTH PRINCIPLE. A strange conceit, that it should be Impossible to know the Consent of all England in a matter of Fact, (for example, the late war) without speaking with each single man in the whole Nation. Yet this is his Discourse when he sayes that *no number less than all can prove a Catholick Consent.*

31. Yet some use certainly he allows of the Fathers for all this, else why does he quote them. Yes, and the Principle (which I reckon his SIXTH,) by virtue of which he enforces them is this, p. 8. *The clear saying of one or two of those Fathers truly alledg'd by us to the Contrary will certainly prove that what many of them (suppose it) do affirm, and which but two or three as good Catholicks do deny, was not then a matter of Faith or a Doctrin of the Church.* I wish my La. had been so Ingenuous as to have made use of this

this Principle when he charg'd our *Church it self* with the mistakes of a few Writers contradicted, not by *one or two*, but sometimes by a whole Nation. But this Principle shows 'twas not *Reason* in him but *Will* and *Interest* which made him so hot. As for his Principle it self, it subsists not at all. For is it not known that more than *one or two*, that is S. *Cyprian* and the African Fathers deny'd the Baptism of Hereticks Valid, yet the **Contrary** was notwithstanding found and defin'd to be Faith and the Sence of the Church. Let him consider how perfectly he engages himself in the very Sphere of Contingency and recedes from Universality, the Sphere of Certainty, when he comes to rely on *one or two*; unless he can show those *one or two* strangely supported and upheld by Universal Nature or concurring Circumstances. 'Tis possible even one or two Lawyers may hap to be ignorant of two or three Acts of Parliament. But, my L^d is still the best confuter of himself, as appears lately by this present Principle apply'd to his former carriage against our Church; To himself then let him answer. I conceive that if *one or two's* (not denying it to be of Faith or affirming expressly 'tis not-of-Faith, he engages not so far; but) bare denying a point, argues what many do affirm, to be not-of-Faith; à fortiori, one or two's affirming positively that to be of Faith and the Doctrine of the Catholick Church which many others barely deny, argues 'tis of Faith: 'Twas of Faith then

then what *Gennadius* cited by himself, p. 59. affirms, that *After Christs Ascension the Souls of all Saints go from the body to Christ*; This being so, let him reflect what himself asserts, p. 49. that *Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Victorinus Martyr, Prudentius, S. Chrysostom, Arethas, Euthimius*, and *S. Bernard* affirm none go to Heaven till the last day. Either then *Gennadius* his Testimony *delivering the doctrine of the Catholick Church* is Inefficacious, and yet 'tis incomparably the best, nay the onely Efficacious one in my L^{ds}. whole book, or else according to him many Fathers (and not *one or two* onely) denying a point is no argument but that point may be of Faith. Whether all those Fathers held so or no is another Question and requires a longer discussion.

32. Fathers then are useless to the Dissuader, as having according to him no *virtue* at all of settling the Understanding; Yet he must make a *show* of them, else all's lost; and so he tells his Readers, p. 8. as if all were well, two things, both very remarkable. The one, that, notwithstanding, *In the prime and purest Antiquity the Protestants are indubitably more than Conquerours* in the Fathers. A high Expression! but, compar'd with what he sayes, p. 7. that in those times our present *differences were unheard-of*, it signifies that they miraculously *more then conquer*, where (if his words be true) no mortals else could either conquer or even *at-*
tacque

taque. For how should one fight against such points in difference from those Fathers who *never heard* of those points! The other is, that *even in the Fathers of the succeeding Ages* the Protestants *have the advantage both numero, pondere & mensurâ*, in number weight and measure; which, joyn'd to his words at the bottome of p. 7. that *each side may eternally and inconfutably bring sayings for themselves out of those Fathers*, which signifies that 'tis to no end or purpose to alledge them, amounts very fairly to this, that he brags Protestants have a far greater *number* of Citations which are *to no purpose* than Catholicks have; that those Citations which have no possible force of concluding or *no weight at all*, do weigh more strongly for *them* than for *us*; and, lastly, that they have a greater *measure* than we of proofs not worth a rush with which they can bubble up their books to a voluminous bigness. And we willingly yield them the honour of having a very great advantage in all three, in case they be such as his own words qualifie them, to wit that each side may *Eternally and Inconfutably* alledge them.

33. We come now to his *main* and most Fundamental and (in comparison) his *onely* Principle, p. 9. laid out thus. *We do wholly rely upon Scriptures as the Foundation and final resort of all our Persuasions, but we also admit the Fathers, &c.* To finish our Discourse about the Fathers will make way to the Scripture. What means
admit-

admitting as contradistinguisht to relying on?
 Not, *relying on*; that's certain, for 'tis contra-
 distinguisht to it; And yet to alledge any thing
 for a *Proof* as they do Fathers, and not to rely
 on it, is to confess plainly (for Truth will out)
 that they alledge them meerly for a *show*. He
 sayes they admit them as *admirable Helps for the*
Understanding the Scriptures and good Testimony
of the Doctrin deliver'd from their Forefathers.
 Have a care my L^d.: This supposes the Certain-
 ty of *Tradition*; For, if there be no Certainty
 of *delivery*, there is no *doctrin delivered*, nor
 consequently any thing for them to *testify*; and
 so the words *good Testimony* (unless our Ground
 of *Continual Tradition* stands) mean directly
 that they are *good for nothing*, as your former
 Discourses or Principles made them. But I ask,
 is their Interpretation of Scripture or Testimony
Certain? If not, why should they even be *ad-*
mitted? Or how can *Uncertain* Interpreters and
Witnessers be *admirable Helps* to interpret right
 and *good Testimony*? I fear my L^d. can onely
 mean they are *Admirable Helps* as Dictionaries
 and Books of Criticisms are to assist his Human
 Skill about the *outward Letter*. (which is a
 rare Office for a Father) and not to give him
 the *inward Sence* of it or the deliver'd Do-
 ctrin of the Catholick Church; for, unless *All*
 conspire to speak to the same point, if any one
 be silent concerning it, it argues not (according
 to my L^d. p. 8.) a *Catholick Consent*, and so is
 far

far beneath an *admirable help*. And this is what we reprehend exceedingly in the Protestants, that they love to talk gaily in common of any Sacred or Grave Authority for an affected *form* or show; but not at all value the *Virtue* or *Power* of such an Authority, nor judge interiorly they have any worth valuing. They would credit themselves by pretending *Fathers*, yet at the same time lay wayes to elude them at pleasure; or (which is their very temper, springing from their renouncing Living and determinate Sence, and adhering to dead unsenc't words) they study to speak Indeterminately and confusedly, not particularly and closely.

34. Do I wrong them? Let my Ld. clear me; His First Principle is by him exprest to be the *Scripture*: and, on this Expression he so strongly builds that p. 10, 11. he concludes thence, and *Certainly* too, thus. *The Religion of our Church* (sayes he) *is therefore certainly Primitive and Apostolick, because it teaches us to believe the whole Scriptures of the old and New Testament, and nothing else as matter of Faith.* What mean the word *Scriptures*? Any determinate sence of it, or the *dead Characters*? Alas, their Church is far from teaching them the *first*, or from having grounds to own such a pretence; but puts the Book in their hands and bids them find the sence of it or their *Faith*, for there is their *Rule*. 'Tis the bare *Letter* then unsenc't he means by the word *Scriptures*, and so he must say 'tis the *out-*
ward

ward Characters his Church teaches us to believe, and nothing else as matter of Faith; that is, their whole Faith has for its object, *Ink thus figur'd in a Book*; A worthy Argument to proove their Church is certainly Primitive and Apostolick: whereas 'tis known, Faith was *before* those Characters; and besides, if this be to be *Apostolical*, we owe nothing to the other Apostles for our faith, but onely to those six who writ. But we mistake him, he means *neither* sence of the word *Scripture*, and hates these distinctions with all his heart which would oblige him to either. He meant to talk of *Scripture* indeterminately and confusedly, which might make a *fine show*, and yet expose him to no Inconvenience by giving any particular account of his meaning. His Inference from this his First Principle, being an Immediate one, will utterly overthrow the Papists without doubt; *Therefore* (saith he p. 11.) *unless there can be New Scriptures we can have no New matter of Belief, no new Articles of Faith.* No my Ld: Yes, as long as by *Scriptures* you mean *no determinate sence* of Scriptures, but the *bare Letter* onely, whose sence is fetch't out by *Interpretations*, and these (as we experience) depend on men's private Judgments and *Fancies*; if men's *Fancies* may vary *every hour*, you may have diverse Interpretations *every hour*, and so *new Articles of Faith* every hour. Is not this a mad kind of arguing, to conclude as absolute an unerrableness in Faith, as if they had not onely a determinate

nate Principle but even as self-evident and unmistakable as the First Principle in Metaphysics to guide themselves by, whereas our daily eye-sight and their own sad experience every day teaches us by the practice of this Principle, and yet their differing in the Sense of Scripture in most high and most concerning Points, that the Speculation is naught, and the Principle itself a false and mis-guiding Light. Nay I doubt my Ld. himself has no hearty value for this his First Principle, though he says he wholly relies on it; For I never saw Protestant Book in my Life thinner and sleighter in Scripture-Citations than is his Dissuasive: so that if that be his First Principle he makes little use of it.

35. Many other Propositions or Supposals are imply'd in his book to give it force. As that It matters not how a Citation is qualify'd so it be but alledg'd. 'Tis no matter whether the question be rightly stated or no. The Tenets of our Church are not to be taken from the use of definitions found in approved Councils, speaking abstractedly, but from the particular Explications of some Divines. Every Foppery is a proper Effect of the Churches Doctrin. Points of Faith ought to be comprehensible to Reason, and Spiritual things suitable to Fancy. The Act of an Inquisition, Sayings of a few Divines or Casuists are all Catholik Faith and the Doctrin of the Church. That is *rationally dissuasive* which is *confessedly Uncertain*. No Answer was ever
given

given to the Citations or Reasons produc't in the Dissuasive. Talking soberly and piously about a point is oftentimes as good as proving it. That tis Self-evident Scripture's Letter can bear but one Interpretation as wrought upon by Human Skills. These and multitudes of such like, though not exprest yet run imply'd in his carriage all along this book, and suppos'd true to give it any force; yet so evidently false and weak, that to pull them out thence and make them shew their heads, is enough to confute them.

I conclude, and charge the Dissuader that he not onely hath never a Principle for his Dissuasive to subsist by, but farther, that 'tis Impossible but himself should know in his own Conscience that he has none, nay more that the Protestant Cause (and the same I say of all out of the Church) can have none. The first part of my charge I have manifoldly prov'd in this present Appendix; The other part of it which charges him with Conscience of having no Grounds, hath two branches; and, for the former of those I alledge that the wayes he takes all along to manage his Dissuasive, are so evidently studious, so industrious, so design'd and perfectly artificial, that, though one who is guided on in a natural way is oftentimes not aware of his thoughts or their method till he comes to reflect, yet 'tis Impossible he should not be aware of his, which he postures with such exquisit craft and such multitudes of preternatural sleights to render his Discourse plausible. For the later of those Branches,

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namely,

namely, that he cannot but know the Protestant Cause can have no Principles, to make it Evident I discourse thus ad hominem, what I have prov'd in Sure-Footing out of the nature of the Thing. 'Tis their most constant and avow'd Profession, and his p. 9. that they do wholly rely upon Scripture as the foundation and final resort of all their Persuasions. This being so, Fathers and Councils are not held at all by them, but as far as they are agreeable to Scriptures; that is, their Testimony has no basis of Certainty from themselves or of their own, but what they participate from Scripture. Wherefore either they are No Principles, or else Subordinate ones to their First Principle, Scripture. Unless then It be Certain or deserve the name of a Principle, They can never be held by Protestants such, nor consequently can merit the name of Principles (even Subordinate ones) because their pretended First Principle from which onely they can derive Title to that dignity is, in that case, none it self: To Scripture then lets come. By which word if they agreed to mean any determinate Sence of it certainly known to be the true one, their Discourse were well-built: But, since their Church can own no determinate Sence of the Scripture deriv'd down from Christ and his Apostles in antecedency to the Scripture's Letter, but (having renounc't that Way or Tradition) must say she has it meerly from that Letter as yet unsenc't, she must mean that 'tis the Scripture's Letter she relies on as the foundation and final

nal resort of all her Persuasions, nay even for her Persuasion that this is the Sence of it. Since then Principles are determinate Sences, not characters or Sounds, neither is Scripture (as they take the word) a Principle, nor consequently Fathers or Councils, whose Certainty is resolvable into It. They'l say, that Letter is a Certain Way to arrive at a determinate Sence, and consequently that they have determinate Sence by means of it. I ask, is the Letter alone such? Then, in case it alone be absolutely sufficient to such an Effect, it will perform it in every one; as, if Fire be alone sufficient to burn all the world, and so overpower all the resistance of the matter, do but apply it, twill do that effect or burn it. Is there requisit some Scholarship in the Subject Scripture's Letter is to work upon, or desire to see Truth in their Will? Then, if this be the onely requisit, it will work its Certifying or determining Effect upon all Schollers and well-meaners; and so no Schollers and well meaners can disagree in the Sence of it. The contrary to which all sober men acknowledge, & daily Experience teaches us as much as we can be sure of any Human Action. The like Discourse holds whatever requisits they desire; for still it will follow they must say, that in whomsoever they place that requisit they cannot differ in the sence of Scripture, which Common Experience will confute. Nor will it avail them to run to Fundamentals, unless it be said the Trinity is no Fundamental, which the Dissuader makes the onely one p. 12. for the Secitians deny this, amongst whom

*'tis a strange Immodesty in the Protestants to say there is none well-meaning, Learned or unap-
ply'd to Scripture. Adding then to this most Evi-
dent Proposition that a Cause proper to produce
such an Effect if we put the Patient dispos'd and
the Application, alwayes produces its Effect,
on the Truth of which all Nature depends, adding
this, I say, to the obvious and common Experience
of Differers about Scriptures sence, in all whom
'tis Impossible to judge either Disposition of the
Patient or Application is wanting, for all read
it and strive with all the wit and skill they have
to find the sence of it; it will follow most Evi-
dently that the Fault is in the Agent or Cause,
that is, that Scriptures Letter is unfit to Certify
or bring us to a determinate sence of it: and
therefore, since, till we know the Sence of that Let-
ter 'tis to us but meir Words, I am forc't by my
reason to judge they have no Principles (Those be-
ing Sence) but that their whole way is wordish;
and, not out of disrespect to them (for this touches
not them more than it does all others who have
left off the way of conveying down determinate
Sence by Living voice and Practise, or Tradition)
but I am oblig'd by Conscience and my duty to my
Cause to declare that their whole Ground of their
Faith is thus hollow and empty. Whence I con-
tend out of the nature of the thing, that their
Cause can bear no way of Sence or Principles,
but must forcibly be upheld by Wordishness; as by
quoting Texts without any Certain Interpreter,
Citations*

Citations of Fathers not brought to Grounds not held by themselves Certain, fine Scripture-phrases flourish of piety, and such like, In which the Dissuader is Excellent; Or else (if the Objecter be very witty and have taken a great deal of pains in the way of Scepticism to be too hard for himself) by bringing all into Uncertainty, which is the acutest way of Wordishness, and most proper to oppose any Discourse that tends to Establish and Settle, because most opposit to it; and so I am to expect Necessity will force them to take this way when any replies to SURE-FOOTING.

I know some will expect I should have answer'd the Dissuasive particularly; but I know no reason why I should be solicitous to stand cutting of each single Branch of Error or be careful to hinder their growth, after I have once pluck'd the Tree that bore them up by the Roots.

P O S T S C R I P T.

IF my Ld. please to reply, (which I fear will be too troublesome a task, because of the ill-naturedness and Inflexibleness of Principles) or, if he resolve to write hereafter against our Church, his Lp. is intreated he would please to go to work like a *Man*; that is, *orderly*, not *confounding* and jumbling all together. Let him first define then what makes a Thing obligatory to be held by Catholiks, a *Doctrin of our Church* or point of Faith; then put down the *very words* of the Council in case it be *defin'd*; next, acquaint us with the *nature* of his objections, vouch them *Conclusive*, and let his Reader know in what their *virtue* or *force* of Concluding is plac't, for this will strengthen them exceedingly; and then let him fall to work when he will. Above all I beg of him not to go about to forestall the sincere verdict of Reason by corrupting first the Will of weak people by pious Talk; but first speak smart and home to their understandings with solid Reasons, and then at the end of the Book preach as much as he pleases against the *wickedness* of a Point when he hath once demonstrated its *Falshood*. Otherwise the *Sermon* so expands and ratifies the *Proof*, and his Godly Rhetorick so evaporates his Reasons, that it reflects no light at all; and so no mortal eye, though straining its optick nerves, is able to discern it.

A Letter

To Dr. Casaubon.

Honoured Sir,

AFter I had printed *Sure-Footing*, I heard accidentally that you had been pleas'd to take notice of my *Way* and some signal Passages in *Schisms Dispatcht*. I was glad to hear that so ancient a Friend of mine had offer'd me a fair occasion to renew our acquaintance, resolving to take an account of his Exceptions, and require them with a due Satisfaction as soon as I could find a season proper. Wherefore, when the last sheet of my Appendix against the Dissuader was under the press, finding both leisure and Opportunity to second my Intentions, I took your Book, perus'd diverse chief passages in it, and particularly what concern'd my self, p. 87.

The first glance of it put me in some Wonderment at the difference I found between you in your Book and the character of you in my Thoughts long ago imprinted there: For in these I found you a solid sober man, a good Scholar, as also ingenuous and candid; but in your Book, particularly in those passages, I saw plainly (and was troubled to see it) you had either none of those Qualities I imagin'd in you, or to a very small degree. But, I began straight to reflect with my self that as, when I was a child,

I fancy'd rooms very spacious and streets very long, which, coming to the state of a Man, I found very strangely diminish'd; so my riper and more Judicious Thoughts saw now the measure of your virtues in their true dimensions, which my younger and unexperienc'd years had so strangely magnify'd and enhanc'd. I doubt not but your outward appearance will make it thought by those that know you, I have said too much, let's see how I can justify my self.

I complain then that your carriage in this one page discovers you at once an absolute stranger to Science, and withal very uncivilly Injurious to me all along without any imaginable need, Ground or the least occasion given.

You begin with a mistake of the reason why the Rational Way explain'd in *Rushworth's Dialogues* was follow'd by me in *Schism Dispatcht*, or rather why that way was *devis'd*; and conceive 'tis because we despair of maintaining the Popes Personal *Infallibility*, and think all your own if you disprove this; So that you strongly apprehend this the basis of all our Faith. By which I see Opinion and Faith is all one with you. Deceive not your self nor your Readers Sir; our Drs. came and do dispute against personal Infallibilities far more strongly than you are ever likely; and if you please to look into our Councils you find no news of building Faith on any such ground, but onely on Tradition. The Way I take is the old-and-ever-Way of the Church; the

the *farther* Explication of it is indeed new, not occasion'd by our relinquishing Personal Infallibility of the Pope, (you shall never show the Church ever built her Faith on a disputable Ground) but by this occasion.

Had you look't into Things and consider'd the progress of the Rational part of the world as well as you pore on Books, you would have discern'd that the Wits of this last half Century have been strangely curious and Inquisitive, and straining towards a Satisfaction apt to bring all into doubt which they conceiv'd to hinder their way to it. Had you reflected on those Heroes of such Attempts, the Noble and Learned *St. Kenelm Digby, des Cartes, Gassendus, Harvey*, and now *the Royal Society*, those living Libraries of Learning in their several ways, you would have found that, parallel to them in the matter of *Controversy* were the *Ld. Fankland* and *Mr. Chillingworth*; whose acute wits finding no Establishment nor Satisfaction in the Resolution of our Faith as made by some particular Divines, nor yet in the Grounds of the Protestant Beleeif, endeavour'd to shake the whole Fabrick of *our* Faith, and allow but a handsome Probability to *their own*. Whence, Doubt and Inquisitiveness being the Parents of Satisfaction and Evidence, Catholick Controvertists began to apply themselves more closely and regardfully to look into the Grounds of their Faith, Tradition or Universal delivery; settled from the beginning of the Church,

Church, proceeded upon by Councils and all the Faithful, insisted on and stuck to by the Fathers, especially those who were most Controversial as *Athanasius*, *S. Augustin*, *Tertullian*, *S. Hierome*, &c. and at large by *Vincentius Lirinensis*; and, to consider how Proper Causes lay'd in Things by the Course of God's Providence had the virtue to produce the Effect of deriving down with Infallible Certainty Christ's doctrine to us. Hence sprung our farther *Explication* of this way which so much bewonders you. 'This is your mistake; now to your Injuries.

I quoted *Rushworth's Dialogues* and call'd it *The rich Store-house of motives fortifying Tradition*. Upon this your Reason works thus. *This I do not understand; I never heard of such an Authour; and it is possible the better to cry himself up he might borrow another name.* What means *This I do not understand*? I'll acquaint the Reader. It means you are so wedded to talk *by the book* that you are utterly at a loss if an Authour be quoted you have not heard of: The reason of which is because as I see by your Discourses, which look like so many dreams, your Genius inclines you not much to trade in Books which pretend to the way of Reason; and, if *Schism Dispatch't* so amaz'd you, 'tis to be fear'd that *Sure-Footing* and its *Corollaries* may put you out of your witts. But with what Civility should you hint I so extoll'd my self under another name, it being (as you say) but *possible*. Should I

I put upon you all things that were possible, what a Monster might I make you? But it abundantly manifests your short reach of reason that 'tis *highly Improbable*. For either I must have discover'd my self to the world to be Authour of *both* books and then I had sham'd my self with so high self-praises; or not have manifested it, and then where's the credit I had got by the other book I had so extoll'd.

Your next Injury is that *I make nothing of, and disclaim the Testimonies of Popes and Prelates, calling them the words of a few particular men,* and cite for it *Schism Dispatch* p. 98. where there is not one word of either Pope or Prelate, nor of *disclaiming* any *Testimony*, nor of calling those *the bare words of a few particular men*; Now, if this be so, every word you charge against me is an injurious Calumny and your whole charge a direct Falsification. My words are these. *By this is shown in what we place the Infallibility of the CHURCH, not in the bare words of few particular men, but in the manifest and ample Attestation of such a Multitude, &c.* Where, though you cannot or will not, yet the Reader, if he understands plain *English*, will see I meddle not with who is or is not Infalible *besides* the Church, nor scan the validity of *Testimonies of Popes or Prelates*, but treat in what the Infalibility of the CHURCH consists: Now the word CHURCH denoting in its First-Signification an *Universality*, I place her Infalibi-

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lity in Universal Attestation from Age to Age. Notwithstanding which, my Corollaries in *Sure-Footing*, if your Wonderment at my *new Way* or your own habituation to words will let you understand them, will let you see I also place Infallibility in lesser Councils; & even in particular Sees, but most in the Popes or the *Roman*; not by way of an *Afflatus* (of which I for my part am able to give no account) but by a course of Things Natural and Supernatural, laid by Gods sweetly-and-strongly ordering Providence in *second Causes*. But what aggravates your Falsification is, that whereas I there counterpose *bare words* and *Attestation*, rejecting the first and making use of the later, you make me affirm *Testimonies* to be *bare words*; To which how much I attribute every such passage of mine will tell you; for on them the way I follow entirely builds. So that this whole Charge is either quite opposit or else disparate to what I say in the place whence you cite my words.

Your third Injury (and 'tis a strange one) is that I *sleight Scriptures, Fathers and Councils as much, (in this business)* and call them in scorn *Wordish Testimonies*; for which you cite *Schism Dispatch't* p. 42. But not such a word is found there, nor I will undertake any where else in my Writings. 'Tis likely indeed, that speaking of such things as you use to call *Testimonies*, (for you name every sleight Citation *such* whether it have the nature of *Witnessing* in it, that is, be built

built on *Sensations* or no) I may say *they* are *wordish*, in regard you have no Certain means to arrive at their Sence; and till then I beseech you what are they else but meer *WORDS*? or rather meer *Characters* and *Sounds*?

What high deference I give to Scripture see p. 18; & 19. beginning p. 146. in *Sure-Footing*: To Councils, see Corol. 27. To Fathers, taking them properly, you may be inform'd by the whole Body of my Discourse concerning Tradition, of which they are a *part*, and the Eminentest Members of it in Proportion to their number.

Your 4th. Injury is that *the onely thing I place Infallibility in is Oral Tradition and the Testimonies of Fathers of Families*; whereas I place *Infalibilities* also in other things, though I make this the *greatest*. But your discourse makes me disesteem and exclude all others, both *Popes*, *Prelates*, *Fathers* and *Councils*, by establishing *this*; Whereas by settling *this*, I establish *all others*, nor find you any such Expressions in my Book; on the contrary 'tis evident by those words I *include* them; unless you think *Popes* and *Prelates* are not *Fathers of Families*, but take lodgings or hire rooms in other mens houses by the week. Truth is, being to express the obligatory descent of Faith from Age to Age, I cast about for a common word fit to express such Deliverers, and conceiv'd this of *Fathers of Families* the aptest; because the Church consisting of *Families*, this was most

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General ; and every Master of a Family, by being such, has an *Obligation* to see all under him taught their Catechism or Faith. This in common, which was enough for my purpose then. But, were I to distinguish the strength of those Testimonies, I should show that a *Priest* hath an Incomparable advantage above a *Layman*, a *Bishop* above *him*, and the *Head of the Church* above a *Bishop*.

Your 5th. Injury is lighter, because it speaks but your own Apprehensions and I am to expect no better from you. My many *chimerical suppositions*, and my *Impertinencies* in which I so please my self, must needs begets wonder (say you) in case the man (as probably) be of any account and reputation in the world. Now my *Suppositions* in the way I take are chiefly these, that men in all Ages had Eyes and Ears, the wit and (if they were good Christians) the Grace not to tell an open and damnable ly to no purpose ; and, for these, I should much wonder my self if you did not wonder at such odd Grounds, and esteem them *Chimerical*, because you have read them in no ancient book ; for you use not to look into *Things*. By this extravagant kind of dealing, you say you cannot but suspect me to be one of the *Fraternity of the new-pretended Lights*. I believe you heartily : For, to begin with Self-evident principles and thence to deduce Immediate Consequences is such a *new Light* to you, as I dare undertake scarce one beam of

it ever enter'd into the Eye of your Understanding. I conceive 'tis the difference between your way & ours which breeds all this mis-intelligence. Ours aym's to bring all Citations to Grounds by way of Cause and Effect ; yours to admit them confusedly, especially if writ by some old Authors provided they speak not for the Interest of Papists, for then they are questionable. Ours is to be backwards in assenting to any thing writ long ago, till our Reason be satisfy'd no Passion or mistake could invalidate its Authority ; yours to believe them hand over head, if the book be but *said* to be Authentick ; which is to a degree the same Weakness as that of the rude Country people who think all true they see *in Print*, and that their having a ballad of it is sufficient to authenticate it. Our Principle is that no Authority deserves any Assent farther than Reason gives it to deserve, and hence we lay Principles to assure us of Knowledge and Veracity in the Authour ere we yeeld over our Assent to his sayings. Yours is kinder-hearted than to hold them to such strict terms, and is well appay'd if some Authour you have a conceit of, praise the other for a good *Writer*, or his work for a good *Book*. Ours is to lay *Self-evident Principles* and deduce *immediate consequences*, and by this means to cultivate our Reason, that noblest Faculty in us which constitutes us *Men* ; yours to lay up multitudes of Notes glean'd from several Authours ; and, if you better any Spiritual Faculty you have,

have, 'tis your *Memory* not your *Reason*. Hence we carry, for the main of our Doctrin, and as far as 'tis antecedent to written Authority, our Library in our *Heads*; and can as well study in a Garden, as sitting in a Library stufft with books; whereas your way of Learning ties you to turn over leaves of Authours, as children do their Dictionaries, for every step of your discourse: and as an ingenious man said of those Poets who spun not their Poems out of their own Invention, but made them up of scraps of wit transcrib'd from other Authours

-----Lord! how they'd look

If they should chance to lose their paper Book?

So we may say of you; that, if your Notes you have with much pains collected, hap to miscarry, you are utterly at a loss; so that little of your Learning is *Spiritual* and plac'd in your Soul, as true Learning should be, but in *material* and perishable paper and characters. In a word, your whole performance ends here, that you are able to declare *what other men say*; whereas ours aims at enabling us to manifest *what our selves KNOW*. No wonder then if our wayes being so different, we cannot hit it; but that, as you *think* ours *Chimerical*, so I *assure* my self yours, and consequently all you write in that way, is (as far as you go about to *conclude* or *cause Assent* by it) exceedingly *ridiculous*.

This, I doubt not, will confirm you in what you said before, that I am *no Friend to Ancient Books*

Books or Learning. To *Note-book* Learning indeed not much ; to *true* Learning or *Knowledge*, very much ; and even to *the other* as far as it conduces to *This*. To Books I am so much a Friend, that I desire not a few should be selected of each sort by a General Council of Schollers, and the rest burn'd, as did an ingenious person ; but I would onely have the riff-raff burn'd ('tis no great matter if that tedious Legend of Dr. Dee's Sprights accompany them) and the Generality preserv'd ; but so, that their Contents should be gather'd in Heads or Common-place books for Schollers to look in occasionally ; not for *rational* Creatures to spend their whole lives in poring on them and noting them with a foolish expectation to find *true Knowledge* by stuffing their Heads with such a gallimawfry, and after 40. years thus spent, never the wiser ; for, indeed, this is little better than for one to hope to frame himself a good sute of Apparel by picking thrums ends out of a multitude of old and overworn Garments. But to the point, I distinguish *Books*. And, as for the *Scriptures*, ascertaining their Letter and Sence (which is done by Tradition) 'tis clear they are of Incomparable value ; not onely for the Divine Doctrin contain'd in them, but also for many particular passages, whose Source or first Attestation not being universal, nor their nature much Practical, might possibly have been lost in their conveyance down by Tradition. Next, follows those of

Councils and Fathers, and (supposing Christ a perfect Law-giver) 'tis clear all they have to do with Faith is to *witness* the Churches beleef; and the former of them to *declare* or explain Faith or the *Churches Sence* against obstinate Hereticks. As *such* then their Books are to be valu'd, that is *exceedingly*. Next, follow such as *Euclid's* or *Archimedes* his, which express *Science*; and those are of very great worth, in regard they acquaint us with and manifest to our hands the *Knowledge* of the former world; which being *Speculative*, little of it could have come down by Tradition, except when that Speculation became Practical, and express it self in Matter by many useful or rather *needful* Arts, Trades or Manufactures. After these succeed *Opinionative Books*, of which this last Age has produced multitudes; and these also are very useful, if the Reader go not too credulously to work, but have right Principles laid already in his head; for then the variety of mens Conceits and their Reasons for them will hint to a Considerer diverse Consequences, which otherwise the slowness and distractedness of our Reason would not have light of; nay, even the miscarriages of such Reasoners avail a wise man, as *Aristotle* out of the *contrary* Opinions of Philosophers, whom he saw failing in their Grounds, gathered very happily the *middle* Truth. These Books therefore are worth preserving. *Human Histories* come next; and These second Tradition in her object,
matter

matter of Fact, after she hath authenticated *them* and the *Circumstances* of their Writers. There are others fit for Explications or Rational Declarations of a point by Similitudes, allusions, Examples & such like, as *Pliny's Natural History*, Emblems, Fictions, & others of an *Ornamental Nature*; which being useful for Sermons and Discourses futable to the middle size of the world, 'tis plain they are preservable: With this caution that these and chiefly *Opinionative* books be either kept from the weak and credulous vulgar, or else in the Preface to them some learned Authority declare in common how far they are to be credited; lest by imposing on the reasons of the Generality, they hinder the world's improvement. *Prayer-books* and *Recreation-books* 'tis almost as Evident they are to be preserv'd, as 'tis that Prayers and Recreations are to be used. Onely caution is to be had the *former* be examin'd well and approv'd by Ecclesiastical Authority, and that the *later* be *chast* and *unabusive*. You have here my sentiment concerning Books; against which you shall find nothing in *Schism Dispatch't*, or any of my Writings. In a word, I would have every thing distinguish'd, examin'd by Grounds, allow'd as far as 'tis reasonable: Nor wonder I much at your mistake of me in this point, for you are not the onely man that thinks all Books, and even Authority to be absolutely deny'd, when they are sort'd, and rank'd in their just degree of merit; that is, indeed, settled and e-

stablish't; for we *Metaphysicians* think nothing to stand firm but by *being*, or *being-held-to-be*, truly what it is.

You denounce *Woe to Colledges and Libraries* if these men *should prevail*. Yet, you see now I leave you *Libraries* enow, and permit you your onely darlings, *Books*; and onely desire you would love them *wisely*. Neither will *Colledges* forfeit their *Libraries* to my Discourse. Onely, whereas you would have *Schollers* educated there, onely *pore* on books, *Note* and (when they come to write,) *quote*, I would have them take Principles along with them by which to judge and consider of what they read. Without which 'tis to be fear'd their much reading will do them more harm then good; and even pervert honest *natural Reason* in them by filling their heads with a multitude of unconnected and unconnectible Ends of *Sayings*, impossible to be ever postur'd in the frame of Reason, and themselves unfurnish'd of means to know which rather to adhere to; which may fit them to talk indeed of many things, like *Parrats*; yet, all the while, for want of Principles, *know* nothing of what they say. If you would have *Colledges* consist of such, I conceive I am a far better Friend to *Colledges* than your self are, and that no great cause of *Woe* will come to them by my means. But, as our way in your conceit brings *Woe* to *Colledges* and *Libraries*, so you affirm that *Atheisme* and *Mahometism* will get by it. By which I understand

derstand what a Disputant you are. I beleeve you would quote Scriptures and Books to confute an *Atheist* or *Mahometan*; whereas I conceive, since all Discourse supposes an Agreement between the Discourfers in some Common Principle, and they denie or undervalue your *written* proofs, you must begin to confute them by Maxims of *common Reason*, antecedent to all Authority. For *these*, Human Nature obliges all men to hold to, unless they have quite irrationaliz'd themselves into perfect Scepticism; whereas some reject or sleight the *other*; which to render Efficacious you must go to work first with Principles of plain reason.

Your last Injury which I account the worst of all the rest, is deliver'd thus. *Others, of approved worth and abilities have met with this man, who, I think, have done him more credit than he deserved.* This argues you are so set to abuse me, that no Testimony, though never so valid, and confest to be such, can stave you off. And the Judgment or Veracity of my Friends, who speak by Experience, shall be question'd, rather than you will be brought to entertain any conceit of me that's handsome. You leap voluntarily into Falsifications and ill-languag'd misconceits without any motive, but are so restif and backward to think or speak in the lest *civilly* that diverse witnesses of *approved worth and abilities*, cannot win you to favourable apprehensions nor keep you from pursuing your resolute

lute Censoriousness. Had you found half that Testimony for the Authentickness of an old Writer in some mouse-eaten rag of Antiquity it had gone down currently with your Genius, and bin next to Gospel. I value not your Judgment of me; but highly and equally dislike your humour as void of all Ingenuity, whether it had been us'd to my self or another. When you review *Schism Dispatch*, and see your mistakes, I hope you will have a good conceit of my Friends at least; for whom in this passage I apologize.

But that I may re-acquaint my self with you, I am to tell you that you also have met me formerly and knew me very well. Nay, that I am exceedingly bound to you for the best favour in the world; which is that, accidentally, you contributed to make me a Catholick. But, because 'tis long ago, I am forc't to remind you of it by two Tokens. One is that in *Durham-house* where you at that time lodg'd when you came to *London*, and in your chamber there, upon occasion of reading a book writ by a certain Protestant Bishop against the *Real presence*, I observ'd, and acquainted you with my observation, that, to my Judgment, the Fathers spoke more favourably for the Papists tenet than the Protestants: Hereupon, you took me by the hand and told me *they were mad who read the Ancient Fathers and saw not they meant Christ was as really in the Sacrament as in Heaven.* The other was yet more

more remarkable, and this; that (either your Grandfather or Father, I know not which, but I think) your Grandfather was intimate with Mr. *Calvin*, and, when he had put out his Explanation of Christ's presence in the Sacrament, which dodg'd and shuffled between *really* and *not-really*, that is, between *is* and *is-not*, he challeng'd Mr. *Calvin* with it, and laid open to him the non-Sence and indefensibleness of it, asking him why he put out so strange an Opinion, which he was never able to make good? at which Mr. *Calvin* took hold of his own finger, and said, *See you this? I would willingly cut it off on condition I had never put it out so.* To which your Grandfather reply'd, *You should then explain it some other way;* Mr. *Calvin* answer'd, *My Institutions are so spread all over France that 'tis now too late.* Thus you, letting me see by a Testimony very *immediate*, that the late Authour of this Tenet which now so reigns all over *England*, with't his finger cut off when he writ it. How you will reconcile this with the late new piece of the Rubrick in the Common-Prayer-book, absolutely renouncing all *real presence*, in which point the Church of *England* formerly exprest her self abstractedly, do you consider.

Sir, I beseech you let this be a fair warning to you how you deal disingenuously for the future; and pardon some of my expressions to my high provocation and exceeding great haste: I

am sure the worst of them is a Civility compar'd to the harsh carriage you have us'd towards your self in openly falsifying both my words and sense, and causlessly wresting to an ill construction every passage you touch't; yet not doing me the right to go about to answer any one in the least, that so I might see by your Reasons you had Grounds to think as you writ. Had you argu'd against me I know too well the right of a Writer, to take it ill if you laid open and nam'd my conceived Faults, though the *names* of them had been *harsh Words*; but not even to attempt to confute them, yet to flie into such Expressions, is the very definition of *railing*. I was extreme sorry to lay open the Fault of a Friend, though my own Concern made it Fitting, and your demerit *Just*, and do assure you that onely the Injury to my Cause, which went along in that action oblig'd me to this Vindication. Setting aside the duty I owe to *That*, I am still as ever.

Your true Friend and

humble Servant,

J. S.

THE HEADS.

Showing from the nature of Rule and Faith, what Properties belong to the Rule of Faith. p.1.

Second Discourse.

Showing the two first Properties of the Rule of Faith utterly incompetent to Scripture. p.12

Third Discourse.

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